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Love it

Buy it

Do it

Make it

Style at Home

APRIL 2015

STYLISH HOMES AFFORDABLE IDEAS

Great value!

VICTORIA SAYS:
"My kitchen is now the best room in the house!"

Kitchen solutions

Fresh ideas for the heart of your home

30+ EASY RECIPES

Perfect bakes for Easter *plus* chocolate treats

HOW TO...

- Decorate with green
- Choose the right oven
- Wallpaper your stairs

Step into Spring!

GET CREATIVE WITH CUTE MAKES

COMBINE PAINT & WALLPAPER

REVAMP JUNK SHOP FINDS

126 fab high street finds *All under £35!*

PLUS 20% DISCOUNT ON TUISS SHUTTERS FOR EVERY READER

IT'S SPRING!
A new season means lots of beautiful buys to perk up your home. Why not make something unique –we've lots of inspiring revamps and projects for you to try

Hello!

Spring is all about **new beginnings and fresh starts,** so it feels quite fitting that I'm joining the team as editor at this time of year. I'm absolutely delighted to be here and look forward to bringing you many issues packed with inspiration and ideas for you to try at home. Start right now and sweep away the cobwebs of winter with our **100 ideas for decorating with spring greens** (page 30). **Perk up your kitchen-diner** with our 13-page special from page 61, and find out how to colour with confidence, rework your dining space and bring in pretty florals as cover star Victoria has done. If you need quick ideas for an **Easter celebration,** turn to page 77 for our **delicious recipes** and be sure to brighten the table with our **creative seasonal makes** (page 54). Plus, it only takes a few new additions to **achieve a fresh look for your bedroom** – see our picks on page 51 – I'm going for country chic. I do hope that you love this issue as much as the team and I do; it's been a real pleasure to put together.
Until next month...

lizzie

LIZZIE HUDSON, ACTING EDITOR

PS Don't miss our **fab home revamps** feature, starting on page 89, and give items you already have a new lease of life.

Stylists *at Home*

Are you a smart shopper and a clever stylist? Then *Style at Home* needs you! Join our exclusive real-life style club and help us create the magazine you want plus share your own home hints, style tips and great buys. What are you waiting for! Email the *Style at Home* team to find out more...

stylistsathome@timeinc.com

Love it Inspiring homes & room makeovers

Buy it Stylish must-have finds at high-street prices

Do it Weekend projects, DIY advice & styling tips

Make it Step-by-step craft ideas & upcycling how-tos

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April's Stylists at Home

Every issue, we have a little extra help, thanks to our six *Stylists at Home*. Meet them here and find their comments in the magazine...

CARON BURROWS

ABOUT ME I'm 51 and I live with my husband, Chris, in a four-bed detached house in Gloucestershire. Having just finished decorating the stairs and landing, the living room and dining area are next on our list. **THE LAST THING I BOUGHT...** was a small wooden dresser from a local interiors shop, which has been beautifully restored. **MY FAVOURITE ROOM IS...** my office. It's filled with piles of fabric!

ROSIE SHIPMAN

ABOUT ME I'm 27 and I'm designing and building a canal boat with my partner Dave. It's on London's Regent's Canal and has a large deck – perfect for summer. **THE LAST THING I BOUGHT...** were metro tiles in several shades of white for our boat's living area. **MY FAVOURITE ROOM IS...** the bathroom on the boat – it's the only one that's finished! It has white flooring and an ice-blue scheme.

KEELEY EBELTHITE

ABOUT ME I'm 41 and I live in a four-bed detached house in Kent with my husband Cliff, and twin sons Connor and James. **THE LAST THING I BOUGHT...** was a chrome heated towel rail for our downstairs loo, which heats the room brilliantly. **MY FAVOURITE ROOM IS...** the dining/family room in our extension – it's a great open-plan living space leading off the kitchen.

SARAH FOX

ABOUT ME I'm 32 and I live with my partner Rhys, in a three-bed rented semi in West Yorkshire. I've recently discovered Instagram, which is fab for decorating ideas. **THE LAST THING I BOUGHT...** was a set of frames from a charity shop. I tried my hand at gilding them and they look really good. **MY FAVOURITE ROOM IS...** our bright and airy dining room because it looks onto the garden.

CHARLOTTE DENNISON

ABOUT ME I'm 34 and I live in a four-bed detached house in North Yorkshire with my husband Martin, and our children Liv and Henry. We moved here in November and have plenty of decorating to do! **THE LAST THING I BOUGHT...** was a throw made with recycled wool from a National Trust shop. **MY FAVOURITE ROOM IS...** the homely cottage kitchen – it's where we spend most of our time.

HAYLEY WHITFIELD-SHAW

ABOUT ME I'm 26 and I live with my husband Mark, in a two up, two down Victorian terrace in Staffordshire. We want to move so we can start a new project. **THE LAST THING I BOUGHT...** was a set of yellow Eames-style dining chairs from eBay. **MY FAVOURITE ROOM IS...** the dining room. The yellow, green and blue retro-style decor was inspired by a humble tea towel!

Become a Stylist at Home today!

Sign up to join our *Stylist at Home* club! You'll receive bonus offers, exclusive sneak peeks and special treats, plus you could appear in a future issue of your favourite magazine. Go to housetohome.co.uk/beastylistathome – we'd love for you to join our club!

Stylists at Home Connected

Join in and share what you've been up to at home this month... we'd love to hear from you

Get in touch!

Get involved by emailing styleathome @timeinc.com. Every reader featured receives a pretty Posy Pot from Simply Thank You

ON FACEBOOK

Find us on Facebook and share your style tips, makeovers and projects. One of our most popular recent posts is this gorgeous craft room, the perfect space to work on your home projects.

For the latest style trends, as well as inspiration and advice, like us at facebook.com/styleathomemag

YOU'VE BEEN TWEETING...

@themagpiegirl *'yup it's official, I'm totally addicted to @styleathomemag so many great tips for my new home!'*

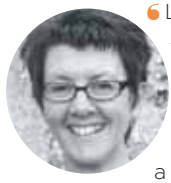
For behind-the-scenes pictures, press show highlights and *Style at Home* news, follow us on Twitter @styleathomemag

ON PINTEREST

Head over to our Pinterest page, packed full of even more decorating ideas, for your daily style fix. This month, we can't get enough of upcycling and have compiled a handy board with our favourite ideas to get your creative juices flowing!

Follow our boards for lots of lovely inspiration and ideas at pinterest.com/styleathomemag/

Cushion crazy



"Last year I got a fantastic Janome sewing machine for my birthday. I change my cushions according to the season and made these designs to create a cosy feel on my sofa."

TRACY MORALEE, HERTFORDSHIRE

I did this!

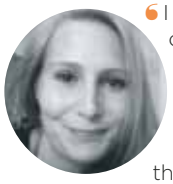
Revamp with paint

"I bought this cabinet from a charity shop for £20 and I gave it a fresh new look by painting it with Annie Sloan English Mustard Chalk Paint. I lined the back with *Alice in Wonderland* paper. I love upcycling and I'm always picking up things from charity shops."

JEMMA LINNELL, LEICESTERSHIRE

I made this!

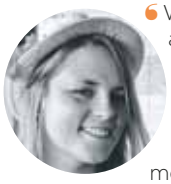
Second-hand finds



I have a bit of an obsession with upcycling and I found this unit in a second-hand shop. I originally started the project for fun and painted it in Annie Sloan's Paris Grey Chalk Paint and used wallpaper to add detail. I didn't have room for it at home but one of my friends saw it and fell in love with it, so it's now in her 10-year-old's new bedroom.

DANA HOWARD, MERSEYSIDE

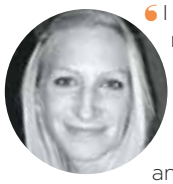
Woodland style



When my husband Sam and I moved into our house in October it was a blank canvas ready to revamp. I've always loved woodland scenes and this inspired me for our bedroom. I found this wallpaper in B&Q and finished off the look with woodland-style accessories.

SIOBHAN MURPHY, LANCASHIRE

Simple update



I used Cath Kidston paper napkins to upcycle these knobs for the chest of drawers in my bedroom. I really like shabby-chic style, bright pretty colours and floral patterns.

MAEVE O'BRIEN, SURREY

Love it!

Our blog

Join in with our cushion obsession and check out Cushie Number. This month, we've picked out these spring designs.

Follow our blog for the latest cushion trends, styling tips and makes at cushienumber.co.uk

VIDEO STAR

Style at Home has landed on YouTube, where you'll find easy craft projects and get-the-look ideas for every room.

Search for Style at Home magazine and check out our video on how to give your kitchen a country look.

@PRETTYLITTLEPOPPET

A lick of pink paint has given this old wicker chair a new lease of life

ON INSTAGRAM

We love to see what crafty projects you've been sinking your teeth into for your home, so share a snap with us on Instagram! Whether it's a furniture revamp or a clever styling idea, we'll pick our favourites each month to showcase here in the magazine.

Share @styleathomemag using hashtags #stylists revamps or #stylistsmakes

@MRSHUNTERHOWARD

This colourful garden bench was made from wooden pallets

@LINGYEUNGB

From biscuit tin to charming vase in next to no time

Your one-stop STYLE SHOP

ALL £35 or under

We've searched the high street and online for this month's collection of brilliant home shopping buys

MATALAN

SPRING FRESH

Update your look with botanical prints in cream, lime and yellow

DAINTY STYLE
Rustic birdcage, £18, Matalan

SOFT FOCUS
Bird print cushion, £6, Matalan

STOW AWAY
Dragonfly boxes, £25, Matalan

LAYER UP
Printed throw, £5, Matalan

LIGHT SHOW
Glass lantern, £12, Matalan

Want it now!

CATH KIDSTON

KNITTED SHEEP TEA COSY, £22

A kitchen can look clinical unless you give it warmth and personality with quirky accessories. And this charming tea cosy certainly fits the bill. Baaaa-eautiful!

HABITAT

PICK A PENDANT

Choose a textured bamboo showstopper

1

2

3

1 **SUNNY OUTLOOK** Moxley spun-bamboo shade, £28, Habitat 2 **ZIG & ZAG** Seagrass shade, £18, Habitat 3 **CRISS-CROSS** Shute woven bamboo shade £25, Habitat

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

NATURAL SHADES
Painted board plaque, £5; Multi frame, £20; Love sign, £6; Bird clock, £12; cushions, from £6 each; all Matalan

CHINA SET
Rococo Sherbet Scallop mixed 12-piece set, £25, Tesco

POUR OUT
Glass tumbler, £3.50; carafe, £8; both Tesco

TESCO

PASTEL ALERT

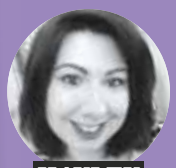
Deck out your kitchen with pretty sugar shades

Tesco has come up trumps with its new season updates. Candy pink, baby blue, soft green and soothing lilac for glassware and crockery make this a look we can't wait to get our hands on. We especially love the scalloped edge to the crockery, too!

SWEET TREAT
Cake tin, £8, Tesco

SAINSBURY'S

MY *FAVOURITE* BUYS



HAYLEY SAYS:

"Monochrome is very versatile and works with any colour, including my favourite – yellow! I love the black tripod lamp, which would look great in my husband's office/man cave. It has a lovely industrial look and feels quite masculine, so would be perfect for him."

SMART LINES
Bowl, £12; vase, £10; candle holders, £4 each; all Sainsbury's

TICK TOCK
Brass-effect clock, £20, Sainsbury's

TIME FLIES
Grey Sand hourglass, £8, Sainsbury's

BLACK & WHITE
Monochrome cushion, £15, Sainsbury's

FOCAL POINT
Tripod lamp, £25, Sainsbury's

ALL £35 or under

Give your kitchen a BRIGHT NEW LOOK

SHOCKING PINK
Wall clock, £10, Hema

+

ZESTY NUMBER
Lemons tea towel, £9.95, To Dry For

+

WEIGH IT UP
Domed scales, £18.99, WorldStores

=

A fabulous new look!

OUTDOORS IN
Floral hanging heart, £12, Next

TREASURE TROVE
Card jewellery box, £14, Next

NEXT

CHIC & SERENE

Try the soothing combination of lavender and pistachio

WALL ART
Leaf plaques, £30 for three, Next

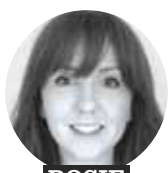
IN CONTRAST
Spot jacquard throw, £25, Next

ON DISPLAY
Amelie vases, £14 for three, Next

DREAM SCHEME
Reversible double duvet set, £35; pillowcases, £8 for two; cushions, from £8 each; throws, from £25 each; all Next

My cushion chart

Burst into the new season with a stylish floral design



ROSIE SAYS:

"The blue design is a great price and looks really luxurious. I'd pick out the key colours, such as deep blue and burnt orange, and use them as inspiration for an eclectic scheme."

MUTED MOTIF
Floral cushion, £14, Next

FADED GLORY
Distressed floral print cushion, £12, BHS

Mad about cushions? Visit our blog cushienumber.co.uk

Go for a soft painterly design for a touch of romance

PHOTO FINISH
Lavender cushion, £15, Littlewoods

HAZY DAYS
Blurred floral cushion, £19.50, Marks & Spencer

BUY IT... STYLE IT!

Fill with utensils or flowers. Chinoiserie cachepots, £25 for three, An Angel at My Table.

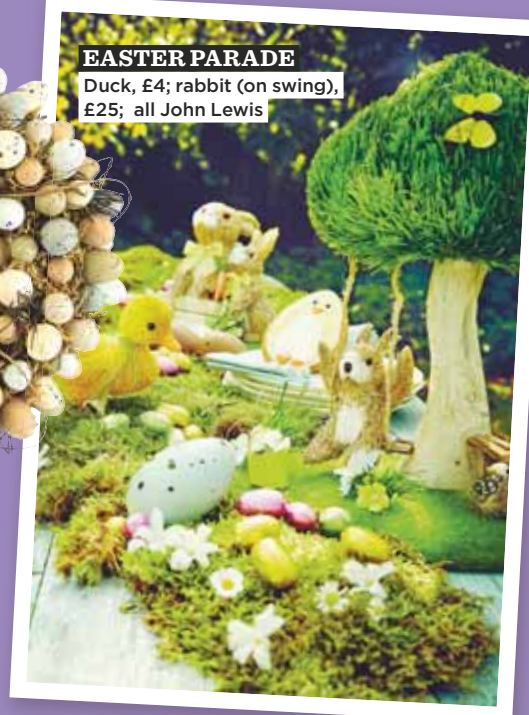
WORDS LAURIE DAVIDSON

ON *STYLE AT HOME'S* RADAR

Celebrate Easter with cute spring-time buys

IN THE ROUND
Easter wreath, £27.99, Gisela Graham

EASTER PARADE
Duck, £4; rabbit (on swing), £25; all John Lewis



GOOD MORNING
Bunny egg cup, £4.50, The Contemporary Home

SPELL IT OUT
Easter sign, £2, The Contemporary Home

HAPPY BUNNY
Rabbit Sweet plate, £26, Out There Interiors

BAKING DAY
Chick and Egg measuring spoons, £16, Laura Ashley

BREAKFAST TIME
Wooden egg cups, £4 for four, Hedgehog Shop

‘We can’t ever

Stylist at Home Amy, 36, from County Durham, fell chose to extend as her family grew, rather than

MEET AMY

My home...

ABOUT ME I’m Amy Cope, 36, a part-time healthcare assistant and nursing student. I live with my husband Phil, 37, a training manager for a mobile phone company, and our children, Evie, eight, and Sonny, six, plus dogs Beau and Alfie.

MY HOME A four-bedroom Victorian terraced house in Darlington, County Durham. We bought it in July 2007.

WHEN I BOUGHT IT It had a small kitchen and three bedrooms, bags of character and a large garden with room to extend. Many of the period features were still intact and we couldn’t wait to put our stamp on it.

AND NOW It’s light and bright with lots of upcycled pieces. We’ve added an extra bedroom and extended the kitchen but retained the character.

STYLE TIP Reuse things that have sentimental value in a practical way. For example, I made a bedside table from my dad’s old trunk that he took to boarding school as a boy, and I re-covered a dining room chair in fabric from a favourite blue dress.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Bright spot
‘Our new yellow sofa from Made.com is my favourite place to sit in the morning – it’s lovely when the sun streams through the front window’

Make it
Update a light fitting with a clever lampshade kit
PAGE 28

GREAT IDEA
‘Always try to work with what you already have. We painted the dark-wood fire surround white’

Buy it
Pick from 10 of the best knitted pouffes
PAGE 24

imagine moving!'

for her house as soon as she saw it and move from the street she loves so much

Colour combo

'I made most of the cushions for our blue sofa using Harlequin fabric. The floor lamp is from Homebase'

We've always loved period properties and were happy in our lovely Victorian terrace in Darlington, but when the kids came along we needed somewhere with a garden,' says Amy. 'Period features are really hard to come by in this area so we looked at lots of places – we even started viewing newer homes, but nothing felt quite right.

Breakthrough moment

Then we picked up the estate agent's details for this house. The exterior shot seemed a bit lacklustre and didn't do the house justice, but we drove past it anyway and it looked lovely. We knew the minute we walked through the door that it was the home for us; it was a beautiful summer's day and the owner waited until the end before showing us the large garden. We fell in love with it, put in an offer straight away and then went on holiday.

While we were abroad, the estate agent called to say another couple had made an offer at the asking price. Luckily, the homeowners thought we were a nice couple and said they'd prefer to sell to us as we'd respect the house as much as »

Stylists *at Home*

SARAH SAYS:

"Amy's upcycled and salvaged pieces ensure her home is unique, while mismatched dining chairs make the space feel really relaxed."

Step by step

'I got the idea for wallpapering the stair risers from a lovely boutique in Tynemouth. I'm hoping the effect will get even better with wear and tear'

Do it

Use wallpaper offcuts to make your stairs pop

PAGE 26

Relaxed style

'When we extended the kitchen we chose bespoke units from The Olive Branch, with a mix of wood and marble worktops. Phil loves cooking, so we went for a Falcon range cooker'

Shelf life

'We have plenty of storage in our kitchen, so we went for shelves from Ikea, instead of wall units'

STYLE TIP

'We made the lights above the dining table ourselves, with Edison bulbs and flex from Screwfix'

New from old

'Phil sanded our table then I painted the legs. The metal chairs came from eBay and we found the others in my mum's garage, which I painted and re-upholstered'

Get *Amy's style* in 3 BUYS

1 CLEAR WINNER Immy cut-glass pendant light, £75, Laura Ashley

2 FLOWER POWER Dahlia cushion, £14.99, Dunelm

3 SPELL IT OUT Papier-mâché letter (8-inch), £2, Hobbycraft

"Phil laid the wooden flooring in the hallway himself. He salvaged it from a nearby factory – it cost just £10 a bag!"

» they did. It felt like it was meant to be and I was so pleased it was finally ours.

The house was built in 1900 and we really wanted to retain as much of its character as possible. The street was built in stages so all the houses are slightly different – ours was built between two older houses on the site of an entrance to an orchard. There's not one straight wall and it's very quirky, but we love that.

Work gets underway

The house didn't need major work as it was already in good shape, but over time we've had the walls skimmed and redecorated every room to suit our taste. The biggest change came three years ago when we added a two-storey extension to give us a larger kitchen-diner with an extra bedroom above.

Sonny's bedroom at the front of the house was pretty small, as the previous owners had pinched some space from it to create a small shower room next door. This was fine when he was a baby, as we only had to fit a cot in there, but unfortunately it wasn't big enough for a single bed. I didn't want the kids to have to share a bedroom, and this was the catalyst for building the extension. We planned to use Sonny's old bedroom as an office once the extension was finished.

Luckily the garden is very long, so we were able to extend the kitchen onto the patio area without losing too much outside space. Our builders were recommended by the architect and they were brilliant, so it wasn't stressful at all. They finished the job in nine weeks, which was earlier than expected, but we had to wait ages for the concrete subfloor to dry, as we wanted to lay solid oak boards. The kitchen couldn't be fitted until the floor was down so we had to use a camping stove for cooking and the sink in our downstairs bathroom for washing-up. Luckily, our neighbours came to the rescue quite often and kept bringing us meals! Eventually our joiner fitted the flooring while we were away for the weekend.

Seamless flow

We knocked down the wall between the kitchen and dining room to make one large room – it's great for entertaining. One Christmas we had about 18 people round and we were all together but it didn't feel cramped at any stage. We also fitted bi-fold doors to link the house with the garden – when we have friends »

Hit the shops

Where to go and what to buy to get Amy's style

✱ **SUNNY SHADE** Pops of yellow throughout your home will give it a fresh new look, so why not go for an uplifting feature wallpaper like Amy has on her landing? Try the Kensington design, £17 per roll, by Graham & Brown.

✱ **QUIRKY EXTRA** Add interest to your kitchen with a retro tray that you'll want to keep on display. The Freda white floral patterned round design from Habitat, £18, would make a striking addition.

✱ **TAKE A SEAT** Think your budget won't stretch to a Chesterfield sofa? Think again. Tesco has a range starting from around £499 in a variety of colours. Dress it up with colourful cushions, like Amy has.

✱ **SHINE A LIGHT** Breathe life into an old lamp base with a new shade. We love the on-trend geometric designs of the Hexagon and Triangle lampshades, £38 each, at Hunkydory Home.

Provençal feel

'I chose a bed and duvet cover from Laura Ashley and finished off the French look with Belle Jardinière cushions from Orchard & Berry. The wardrobe was left behind by one of our tenants'

GREAT IDEA
'Use the top of your wardrobe as a display area'

"Most of our furniture is either from auctions, inherited, or items left to us by tenants in our rental properties"

Work it

'Sonny outgrew this room so we turned it into a home office'

» round in the summer I still feel like I'm part of the action when I'm in the kitchen.

With the layout of the room sorted, we started searching online for our perfect kitchen and came across Dan Clayton of The Olive Branch. The beautifully painted Shaker-style design is bespoke, but it's not as expensive as I thought it would be. I knew we'd be spending a lot of time in here as a family and doing plenty of entertaining, too, so Phil and I both felt it was well worth the investment.

Furnishing the space

My approach to accessorising is simple: I buy things that make me smile and brighten up a room, and I get them when I see them, rather than meticulously planning each space. Most of our furniture is either from auctions, inherited or items left behind by tenants in the rental properties we own. Some pieces I leave as they are, but others are upcycled to suit our decor.

I studied fashion and textiles in sixth form, so I make all my own blinds and cushions. When I was on maternity leave with Evie I set up a business making Roman blinds and soft furnishings, so I'm pretty good with a sewing machine. Phil's great at DIY, too. He put down the parquet flooring in our hallway, which was salvaged from an old factory in Darlington and was a real bargain at just £10 a bag. We'd used it in our previous home but still had enough left over to fit it in this house, too. It was a tough job as the wood was covered in old glue, which was like tar, and I remember spending ages sitting round the woodburner in the garden chiselling it off. It took ages but the hard work was definitely worth it.

Perfect location

I can't imagine we'll ever move from here as it gives us the best of both worlds. It's within walking distance of the school and shops but it's also within easy reach of country tracks where I love to go running along the riverside and through farmland.

The street has an old-fashioned, friendly community spirit and everyone looks out for each other. We all get together for occasions like Bonfire Night and I've got an allotment so often give my neighbour fruit and veg to make jams and chutneys. A lot of our neighbours have extended too and I think it's because the street has such a sense of belonging – nobody wants to leave! It would be hard to find anything that ticked all these boxes elsewhere.'

WORDS KAREN WILSON PHOTOGRAPHS KATIE LEE

Stylists *at Home*

ROSIE SAYS:

‘The bed frame is a lovely modern version of a classic French capitone design and is ideal for creating a romantic feel in a bedroom.’

Great find

‘Our neighbour found this fireplace, which we painted. The tree print came from Ikea’

White & blue

‘We restored the original bathroom tiles, which had been painted over. The cabinet was left by the previous owners’

Growing up

‘Evie’s bedroom is due for a revamp as the wall art was done when she was little and she’s developing her own style now’

Get clicking Go to housetohome.co.uk/styleathome for more house tours

Buy Amy's look...

KNITTED POUFFES

Add comfort and style to your space with a cosy footrest, inspired by Amy's look

Up the style stakes and add texture to your home with a chunky knitted pouffe, just like Amy's. Whether it's used as a comfy footrest, casual seating for when guests are over, or an extra surface, this versatile accessory will work perfectly in both country and contemporary rooms. They also come in a variety of colours. Why not add one or two oversized floor cushions to continue the relaxed feel in your living space? We've picked 10 of the best designs, starting from just £59.99.

£59.99 DUNELM

Pop a tray on the Natural Knitted pouffe (H43cm x W72cm) and use as an extra table when needed

£72.99 WORLDSTORES

Finish off a monochrome decor with the Hand-knitted pouffe in Black (H38cm x W48cm)

£60 TESCO

Add warmth to your living room with the Knitted Brown pouffe (H35cm x W53cm)

£139.95 NORDIC HOUSE

Work the Cable-knitted pouffe in Lime Yellow (H35cm x W47cm) into a retro-style scheme

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

£89
MARKS & SPENCER
Pick the Knitted pouffe in Chartreuse (H35cm x W50cm) and fill your space with spring shades

£70
NEXT
Introduce pattern with the Charcoal and Jute knitted pod (H35cm x W53cm)

Natural hue

£65
SABICHI
Let the Hand-knitted design in Scarlet (H38cm x W48cm) add a shot of colour to your room

£95
HABITAT
Team the Knot design in Cobalt (H42cm x W50cm) with copper accessories for an on-trend look

£79.95
HOUSE OF BATH
Place the Cotton Knitted Pouffe in Cream (H38cm x W48cm) on a dark-grey rug

£85
LOAF
Keep your look cool and contemporary with the Bug pouffe in Ash Grey (H35cm x W50cm)

Style secrets

Follow our top tips for including a pouffe in your space

COLOUR SPLASH
Most designs come in a single shade so be sure to choose one that complements your existing decor. Then, find cushions and throws in the same colour to tie the look together.

PRACTICAL PICK
Decide what function your pouffe is going to serve before buying. Some are much firmer than others so test it out in the shop, if possible, to see if it's better suited as a footrest or seating.

ALL-ROUNDER
A pouffe can double up as a handy piece of furniture for any room. Why not pop one into a child's playroom as a fun feature? Or, put it in the corner of a guest bedroom to add a cosy and welcoming touch.

WORDS CASSIE PRYCE

Try Amy's idea...

PAPER YOUR S

Give your stairs a colourful makeover and create a talking risers. It will transform your hallway with a riot of pattern

Staircases are often overlooked when it comes to revamping a home, but we say they're more than a means of getting from one floor to another. They're not the easiest of spaces to work with but, with the right preparation and a little vision, a staircase can be transformed into the star of the show as you walk through the door.

It's easier to wallpaper stairs that are already stripped or painted, but if you have carpet, look what's underneath – they may be perfect for a makeover.

Choosing your look

Think about the colour scheme around the stairs. For maximum impact, decorate your hall or stairwell in a neutral shade so it won't detract from the wallpaper you choose. Try geometric or abstract patterns for an eye-catching entrance, or alternate a wallpapered riser with a painted one. This is the perfect opportunity to be clever with your look: accentuate the natural rising of the steps by graduating colours, from dark at the base to light at the top.

Practical considerations

If possible, choose prints that can be used sideways, as the wallpaper will not be wide enough to cover the average stair and joining two pieces together can be tricky.

As each riser is quite a modest space to cover, using a wider range of wallpaper designs can give a more interesting look – ask friends and family for offcuts or use up old rolls. With our easy-to-follow guide, a brand-new look is just a few steps away!

REPEAT IT
Match the paper on your risers to that of your hallway walls for a cohesive look

TIP *Co-ordinate your staircase – paint the balusters in a matching shade.*

Choose a fairly small-scale pattern so the detail is not lost

RETRO VIBE
Choose a bold wallpaper, such as Orla Kiely's Stem design for maximum impact

3 WOOD PAINTS to buy

1

2

3

1 FLOOR IT Oil-based Floor Paint, £26ltr, Little Greene **2 WOOD LOOK** Polyx-Oil Tints, £22 for 750ml, Osmo **3 SOFT SHEEN** Eggshell paint, from £29.62 for 750ml, Earthborn

TAIRS

point, as Amy has, by wallpapering the and colour, and is easier than you think

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Bold look

STEP-BY-STEP

Prepare and paper your stair risers with our easy-to-follow guide

YOU WILL NEED

- Small hammer
- Pliers (for removing nails and staples)
- Sandpaper & wood filler
- Knot sealer (if needed)
- Wood primer
- Top coat/wood tint/wax
- Tape measure
- Steel rule & pencil
- Dustsheets
- Wallpaper
- Wallpapering table or large surface
- Scissors or scalpel
- Wallpaper paste
- Pasting brush
- Wallpaper hanging brush (to smooth wallpaper)
- Clear varnish

1 Prepare all wood surfaces by removing or hammering in any nails on the treads and risers. Next, sand any rough areas and fill cracks with wood filler. If you're exposing the stairs for the first time, check the wood for any knots and apply knotting solution to prevent resins leaking out. Hammer down or replace any loose boards.

2 Prepare the treads – use a primer and top coat if you're painting them, or apply wax or a wood tint if you want a natural look. Next, prepare the risers – it's a good idea to paint these as well, to ensure there's no gaps around and under the edges of the treads. Avoid applying wax to the risers, as the paste will not adhere.

3 Measure each riser as they may differ slightly, and number lightly in pencil. Position your wallpaper lengthways (to avoid a join), against the riser, with one straight top edge sitting under the tread, allowing a little overhang. Draw the scissors gently along the line where the base of the riser meets the next tread, plus the sides. Cut along the scored lines. Repeat for all the risers.

4 Apply the paper to the correct riser with wallpaper paste and smooth down with a hanging brush to remove any bubbles. Make sure the edges are stuck down and allow to dry for at least 24 hours. Finally, apply a layer of clear varnish to the paper to protect it from knocks and scuffs.

WORDS KATE PARKIN **PHOTOGRAPHS** DAVID GILES, TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

Make Amy's style...

DRUM LAMPSHADE

Create a bespoke design with fabric to suit your style, like Amy has

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Funky fitting

Experiment with fabric to create a unique lampshade. Pick up a kit then choose a patterned or plain design to make a shade to suit your scheme, whether for a ceiling light similar to Amy's or a table lamp like ours.

HOW TO

YOU WILL NEED

- Dandelion curtain fabric in Saffron, £11.20 per m, Terrys Fabrics
- Fabric scissors
- 30.5cm diameter drum shade kit, £19, Hobbycraft

1 Unpack the lampshade kit – you should have two rings, a self-adhesive lampshade panel, double-sided tape and a lollipop tool. Cut your fabric to the dimensions specified in the kit and lay flat, right side down.

2 Peel away the backing on the panel around 10cm and stick to your fabric, unrolling as you go. Crease and peel off the pre-scored edges along the panel and attach double-sided sticky tape to one short edge.

3 Take both rings and wrap with the tape provided, pinching into the frame, then remove the top layer of tape. Place both rings at the end of the panel and carefully roll along the two long sides. Remove the top layer of tape on the short edge and press the ends together. Fold the fabric in and tuck under the rings, using the lollipop tool for a neat finish.

Cost £30.20

PROJECT & STYLING CASSIE PRYCE **PHOTOGRAPHS** DAVID GILES
ROSA SMALL LAMP BASE, £18, BHS

3 White furniture creates a clean, crisp feel when paired with a green backdrop. Tallow White dining chairs, £140 each; Ludo White and Oak shelving unit, £350; all Habitat.

4 If you want to decorate a large area in one colour, go for a light shade to avoid making the space feel dark. Pastel or sage green will add character to your room while still making it feel light and airy.

5 **Try working zesty lime into a teenager's bedroom for a fun and vibrant pop of colour. Go for bright bed linen in this energising shade for an inexpensive makeover idea they'll love.**

6 Why not go bold and paint a feature wall bright green? Try Kiwi Crush Endurance+ matt emulsion, £26.49 for 2.5ltr, Dulux, for a zingy focal point.

7 **Choose a deeper, forest green shade if you want to work a more traditional look. This colour is perfect for creating a cosy living room space and is great alongside creams or maroons.**

8 Team deep greens with dark-wood furniture to create an elegant mood in a dining or living room. Go for walnut or mahogany for a classic finish.

9 **Apple green will refresh a space – try this shade in a playroom or craft room for a light and welcoming environment.**

10 For a bolder look, add contrasting colours to your green scheme. Deep plum works with muted tones, while bright, candy pink adds a fun twist to pastel green.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

100 style ideas

Decorating with spring greens

Use fresh, vibrant shades to bring the outdoors in and give your home a lift

Whether you want to add drama with elegant emerald or soften the look with marvellous mint, we've compiled a handy guide to decorating with the season's hottest hue. With green available in a whole host of shades, it's easy to find one to suit your taste and update your scheme. Search for paint, furniture and tiles in glorious greens or, if a full makeover isn't for you, then a few well-chosen accessories will inject colour into a neutral setting and give your room a whole new look in next to no time.

1 Begin by deciding which shade, or shades, of green you want to incorporate into your space. Different tones each create their own mood, so think about this when choosing.

2 Consider painting your walls for a permanent, large-scale transformation. Collect paint swatches and remember to test the colours out in several different areas of the room, as the light (or lack of it) will affect them drastically.

Stylists at Home

KEELEY SAYS:

11 **"Now that spring is here, add green to your decor to bring the outdoors in. It looks lovely when paired with pink or yellow."**

15 **Go for a light and fresh shade of green in a kitchen or bathroom where possible. This will help the room feel clean, particularly when teamed with crisp white furniture.**

16 Dark-green kitchen tiles are ideal for creating a country look but try to use a lighter colour, such as cream, elsewhere in the room to stop the scheme feeling closed in. Consider using them behind the hob as a splashback, for example.

17 **Patterned tiles in a green shade look great dotted among cream or white tiles on a wall. Try adding a border of green patterned tiles where your walls meet the worktops.**

18 Sage green is a popular choice for country-style kitchens and works well when teamed with whites and natural woods. Sugary pink or pale-lilac accessories are perfect partners for this versatile shade.

19 Got wooden kitchen units? Give them a makeover with a lick of paint in a soft shade of apple and update cupboard knobs.

12 *Looking for a muted shade? Try Fine Rosemary One Coat matt emulsion, £19.84 for 2.5ltr, B&Q.*

13 Use feature wallpaper to incorporate a green shade into your room. Botanical and leaf prints work well, as do pretty florals.

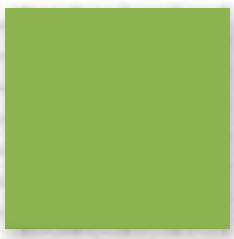
14 Nature-inspired designs not your thing? Geometric prints are big news and look great in an olive green shade if you're channelling a retro vibe.

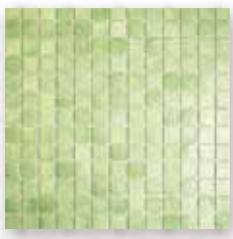
20 Copper is bang on trend and looks lovely with mint green to give a classic or contemporary look. Treat yourself to a set of copper pans and hang on the wall next to your hob for a striking feature.

21 **For a quirky idea, try using Mapei Ultracolour Plus grout in Jade Green, £17.17 for 5kg, Lilley Tile and Stone, with crisp white tiles for a funky finish. It'll be the talking point of your kitchen.**

TERRIFIC TILES

22

23 

24 

22 REAL LOOK Walk In The Park floor tile, £43 per sq m, British Ceramic Tile
23 COLOUR BLOCK Glass wall tile in Lime, £3.49 each, Homebase
24 BE SQUARE Lotus mosaic floor tiles, £11.95 each, Walls and Floors

Freshen up your kitchen

Inject splashes of green with colourful accessories

25 Go for green gadgets to bring colour into a white kitchen. Try the Premier Housewares kettle in Lime Green, £20.99, Wayfair.

26 **Patterned tea towels are an inexpensive way to add colour to your kitchen and can be easily changed to suit your tastes. Team with matching oven gloves.**

27 Use potted herbs to add natural greenery to your kitchen. Display along the windowsill in terracotta pots with chalkboard labels for a country cottage feel.

28 **As an alternative to herbs, why not plant wheatgrass in a window box? Its vibrant colour will add a refreshing touch and you can reap the healthy benefits by adding it to smoothies and juices.**

29 Scour your local charity shops and car-boot sales for green glassware, china and enamel crockery. Pieces will look great grouped together either on a rustic dresser or modern shelving unit.

30 Add the Matrix Lime Splashback, from £119.99, Topps Tiles, behind your hob for a striking pop of colour in a modern kitchen.

Look for a rattan footstool that can double up as a handy table

37 Choose a statement sofa in a green shade to give your living room a focal point. French Connection Chalk four-seater sofa in Lime, £1,098, DFS.

38 Choose flooring that is light and bright to create a feeling of space. Whitewashed floorboards will channel a natural vibe and can be cosied up with a dark-green rug for the colder months.

39 **Work fresh flowers and foliage into your styling to incorporate natural greenery. Choose low-maintenance plants, such as cacti or succulents, if you want to create this look without the fuss.**

40 Not only do house plants help bring colour to your space, they also promote a healthy living environment by releasing oxygen and absorbing impurities. Use spray paints to transform plain plant pots into stylish containers.

41 **Pop succulents into vintage teacups with plastic lining and a little soil for a cute styling idea. Group several together in mismatched crockery on a windowsill for an eclectic vibe.**

42 Create your very own indoor garden with a glass terrarium. The Glass Bowl terrarium with a small air plant, £15, UniqueBotanicals at Etsy, is a great size to get started with. Pop it on your coffee table.

43 **Add moss as an inexpensive filler to terrariums and vase displays. Spray with water several times a week to keep it from turning brown.**

44 Keep hold of green wine bottles, clean them thoroughly and remove the labels. Pop a dinner candle inside each one for romantic lighting in your living or dining room.

45 Use leftover green paint to transform the insides of cubed wall units for a quirky colour hit. Display accessories, such as candleholders and photo frames, to add a homely touch.

31 Team greens with earthy tones for a stylish colour combo. Rusty browns and leafy shades will set the scene for a relaxing space and work all year round.

32 Create a country-inspired scheme by working in natural woods and rustic wicker. Add a distressed coffee table to your living room to perfectly complement olive green tones.

33 **Treat yourself to a few rustic wicker or seagrass baskets to store all your living room bits and bobs in, such as magazines or folded throws. Try the Rush Weave baskets, £20 for three, Sainsbury's.**

34 Add splashes of warm terracotta and mustard yellow with accessories, such as cushions or vases. These shades go hand in hand with botanical greens and are perfect for continuing a natural, earthy look.

35 **Layering different shades of green is a great way to echo the outdoors and build up layers of texture. Forest green sits well with grass green, or try mixing a lime shade with a khaki tone.**

36 Introduce chic monochrome accessories to make green accents really pop. Look out for black and white cushions to give your green scheme a modern twist. The funky Striped Cut Velvet cushion, £18, Tesco Direct, is a fab choice.

Stylists *at Home*

CARON SAYS:

46 **"Green schemes feel really restful, making them ideal for living rooms and bedrooms. The pale-green sofa looks so inviting!"**

BEAUTIFUL VASES

47 TACTILE DESIGN
Ben de Lisi Textured vase, £10, Debenhams

48 MEADOW FRESH
Butterfly metal jug, £9.50, Marks & Spencer

49 VINTAGE TOUCH
Green Glass Bottle vase, £9.95, Decorator's Notebook

50 Use green in a hallway for a smooth transition between indoors and out. Why not give your front door a lick of green paint too?

51 A conservatory lends itself to a green colour palette and the natural light will help open up the space and connect it to the garden. Continue the look with indoor plants and mix in botanical accessories.

53 Consider investing in blinds in a green colourway for a conservatory to help bring the outdoors in. Try Hillarys for a range of colours and options. If having green at every window is too much, fit them on one side of your conservatory, with white for the remaining ones.

54 Give an old cane chair a new lease of life by making a seat cushion then covering in a palm leaf print, turning a conservatory into an exotic sunroom.

52 *Be bang on trend with the Botanical Meadow embossed bottle lamp, £29.99, Dunelm.*

55 Botanical prints are a style favourite this season and can be found on all manner of accessories on the high street, from cushions and mugs to artwork and bedding.

56 Flora and fauna motifs are ideal for giving your space a spring makeover. Look out for bumble bees and other insect designs to work into your look, too.

57 Collect fern leaves and pop individual stems into narrow vases for a simple and contemporary display. Vary the heights of the vases and group as a cluster on a windowsill.

58 Use botanical prints against plain backgrounds to keep the look feminine and fresh, rather than chintzy. Creams or whites make a good neutral base, while yellow will add a summery feel.

59 Group together botanical-inspired prints and even plates, in various shapes and sizes for a quirky display idea. Artwork, from £17.50; frames, from £9.50 each; all Marks & Spencer.

60 Why not paint the spindles on your stairs in graduating shades of green? Draw the eye up by working from light at the bottom to dark.

Botanical craft ideas

Be inspired by nature and try these simple makes

61 Look in your local charity shop, or on eBay, for vintage books with botanical illustrations. Carefully cut these pages out and pop into frames for unique wall art.

62 For a more temporary display, use green washi tape to stick the corners of the pages directly onto the wall. Group together in an asymmetrical cluster.

63 Collect leaves and pop them into clear glass frames. Why not spray with gold or copper paint beforehand to add shimmer? Try Plasti-kote Metallic Gold spray paint, £7.59 for 400ml, Hobbycraft.

64 Make a spring wreath by using a foam ring as a starting point. Soak the foam then trim the stems of your flowers and foliage and push into the ring.

65 Pick up a roll of botanical design MT Plant washi tape, £5.50, Fox & Star, and decorate plain notebooks or your diary.

72 A botanical print is perfect for spring. Use the light and airy Dorthy fabric, £5 per m, Ikea, to run up a made-to-measure pair of curtains for your home.

73 Team your cushion collection with cosy throws in co-ordinating colours or stylish neutrals for a softer look. Go for a lightweight material now that the weather has started to warm up.

74 **Get crafty and update a plain cushion cover by stitching on green felt leaves for a springtime vibe. Sew a line down the middle of each leaf to give a subtle 3D look.**

75 Add a green decorative edge trim to an existing cushion cover for a quick and easy revamp. Try the small pompom trim, £4.99 per m, Dunelm.

76 **Simple green and white textiles look great when several prints are combined. Use gingham, stripes and leaf motifs in the same room for a co-ordinated look that isn't repetitive.**

77 Ditch the traditional fruit bowl and display green apples and zesty limes in a large glass vase for a fresh spring centerpiece on your coffee or dining table.

78 **Continue to work the colour palette with a green scented candle in your hallway or bedroom. Go for a light spring scent such as vanilla or apple. If you've space, pop several candles in different heights on a tray for a twinkling display.**

79 Paint old frames green for a quick update. Try creating an ombre effect by using white paint on the top half then fade it into the colour further down. Use up old paint you already have to keep costs down, or pick up tester pots.

80 Mix green accessories with grey accents for a contemporary look. Dove grey works well with mint green for a calming vibe, or team charcoal grey with zingy lime for an eye-catching combo.

66 Give your dining table a springtime makeover with new tableware. Check out the Green Botanical Ladybird range from Dotcomgiftshop.

67 Give wooden dining chairs a makeover by painting each one in a different shade of green. The fact they are the same colour will keep the look unified but a range of hues adds a fun and individual element.

68 **Try Laura Ashley's Furniture Paint in Pale Eau De Nil, £22 for 1 ltr, to bring unloved pieces back to life with a makeover in this classic green shade.**

69 For a more subtle splash of colour, paint the bottom third of your chair legs in a green shade for a modern dipped effect. This will add a stylish detail to plain white or wooden furniture and is great if you love the Scandi look.

70 **Pop fresh green covers onto old chair pads for a simple makeover idea in your dining room. Or make your own with foam. Go for a darker green fabric or one with a busy pattern to help hide stains and marks.**

71 Add a green rug to your room for a quick and inexpensive spring transformation. We love the Perth design in Fennel, from £50, John Lewis, for a splash of sophisticated olive green.

Stylists *at Home*

CHARLOTTE SAYS:

81 **"These beautiful botanical curtains have inspired me to dust down my sewing machine and make my own on a budget."**

WORDS CASSIE PRYCE **PHOTOGRAPHS** TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

85 **Treat yourself to new bed linen if you want to give your bedroom a temporary splash of green. Go for a pretty patterned design and add a plain coloured throw to layer up the look.**

86 Choose a green palette to suit the mood you want to create in your bedroom. An emerald shade will add elegance when teamed with a gold gilded mirror, whereas mint or soft sage will give a calm atmosphere.

87 **Replace old handles on a chest of drawers with green ones for a quick update. We love the Spotty Green ceramic knob pulls, £4.25 each, Notonthehighstreet.com.**

88 Update your window dressing to give it a seasonal twist. Why not add fun green tassels to your tie backs, or jazz up plain curtains with a patterned panel?

89 Introduce flora and fauna into your look with the Fawn cushion, £8, and the digital print Daisy cushion, £7; both George Home. Pile up on a stool or armchair when you take them off the bed.

82 *Use the Verdi dinner plate, £5, Marks & Spencer, to pep up your collection of white china.*

83 Sew a new table runner. Cut a length of green fabric to fit your table, plus extra for overhang, and hem the edges.

84 Use natural green foliage to make a pretty centrepiece for your table. Pop bundles into squat containers so you can still see each other while you're eating.

90 **Pick up an inexpensive lampshade kit and give a tired floor or table lamp a new lease of life with a fresh green fabric drum. Try the Lampshade kit, £15, Hunkydory Home.**

91 Cover canvases with green wallpaper and hang in a series above your bed for a unique wall art idea. Mix and match the papers to add interest. A run of three or four arranged in a square works well.

Going green

Try your hand at these thrifty upcycling ideas

95 Use a leafy wallpaper design to line the back of a glass-fronted cabinet for a splash of green. Paint the frame in crisp white for a clean finish.

96 **Cut simple leaf shapes from sticky-back plastic and apply to jam jars. Spray paint in different shades of green and peel off the stickers to leave a botanical design.**

97 Collect scrapbook paper in a mixture of green shades and glue to the top of a desk or craft table. Place on a glass topper to create a protective surface.

98 **Re-upholster a footstool by stapling on green fabric to suit your scheme. Choose a material that co-ordinates with your sofa or cushions to help tie the look together.**

99 Use a selection of pretty green scrapbook sheets to make paper flowers. Glue on a piece of thick wire for the stem and, once dry, display in white ceramic vases for a quirky look.

CHEERY CUSHIONS

92 **ALL A FLUTTER** Love Words with Butterflies cushion, £10, Matalan
93 **GARDENER'S CHOICE** Herb print cushion, £25, House of Fraser
94 **TROPICAL TWIST** Leaf cushion in Emerald Green, £29, Atkin and Thyme

100 Share your spring green decorating and styling snaps with us on Instagram @stylistsathome – we'd love to see them.

'I created my

While extending and rejigging her Victorian semi, its beautiful period features, ensuring it was perfect

MEET LARA

My home...

ABOUT ME I'm Lara Haynes, 45, and I'm a wedding florist with my own company, Darling & Wild (darlingandwild.com). I live with my daughter, Freja 13, and son Tom, 11, and our Maltipoodle, Sugar.

MY HOME A three-bedroom period semi, which I think dates from around the 1890s, in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. I bought it in 2007.

WHEN I BOUGHT IT The house was charming and decorated in a pretty style, but it felt small. It also had a downstairs bathroom, which wasn't practical with two young children.

AND NOW I knocked down the back wall where the downstairs bathroom used to be and added an extension to create a dining room, with my new bedroom above. Tom's old room has been used to create a corridor and an upstairs bathroom.

STYLE TIP I don't believe that everything has to match. If you like several styles, as I do, work them confidently into your home – you'll often find they look great together.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

GREAT IDEA
'Replace heavy curtains with pale or lightweight ones for spring'

Room to grow
'This extension has given us the extra space we needed – I plan to replace the dining chairs with stackable metal ones. My mum found the curtains at John Lewis'

dream home'

Stylist at Home Lara, 45, from Kent, retained for her family and filled with quirky charm

Fab feature

'The stairs are a work in progress – I plan to wallpaper each riser with offcuts'

Finding this house was a real stroke of luck,' says Lara. 'I was downsizing from a larger Victorian house and mentioned this to a lady who lived around the corner. She said she was putting her place on the market, so I went round to see it and loved the fact that it still had lots of period charm – sash windows, a quirky layout, pretty fire surrounds – but on a smaller scale.

The large garden was a big plus, too, especially as there was a potting shed – the perfect spot for housing the flowers I arrange through my business. My children, Freja and Tom, who were then five and four, loved it too, and I was lucky enough to buy the house privately.

Planning ahead

From the word go, I knew there were things I wanted to change. The biggest problem was that the bathroom was downstairs and could only be accessed through the kitchen – hardly ideal when you have two young children. However, it wasn't until 2012, five years after I moved in, that I was in a position to do something about it. I decided to rip out the bathroom and knock down the wall at the back of the house and create a two-storey extension, which local architects Kaner Olette helped plan. The new, larger space would become the dining area and link to the kitchen.

Upstairs, Freja moved into the front bedroom, which had been my room, while Tom moved into Freja's bedroom. His old room was divided into a corridor and a longed-for upstairs bathroom. It's still too small for a bath, and I do miss having one, especially after a long day moving heavy floral arrangements, but »

Classic design

'The grey Burford kitchen units are from Howdens. I added extra storage with a wall shelf'

Buy it
Perk up your shelves with a floral mug
PAGE 42

Cute collection

'This shelf is great for displaying pretty mugs'

Calm tones

'We use the snug as an office and TV room. The walls are painted in Farrow & Ball's Brassica'

Get *Lara's style* in 3 BUYS

1 GLIDE ALONG Fantasy Swan ornament, £8, George Home **2 FADED FLORALS** St Germain Embroidered cushion, £25, Marks & Spencer **3 MAD AS A...** Designer Grey Hare lamp, £85, Abigail Ahern at Debenhams

"If real wood flooring is too expensive, consider wood-effect vinyl. I laid it in my dining room and am amazed how realistic it looks"

» it's such a great-looking space; I'm really thrilled with it. So often bathrooms are an afterthought, but I worked hard to get my one-off look. I sourced some oak from a timber yard and got a local carpenter to rout it to make a tongue-and-groove wall panel, then I waxed it to give a distressed finish. I did the same thing to an inexpensive wooden mirror from B&Q.

Next, I splashed out and had the vanity unit specially made, but I kept my budget in check by going for a simple basin and taps. The Edwardian-style radiator, from Beaumont Cast Iron, was quite pricey, but I love it – especially after I had it spray-painted pastel pink. Both this and the vanity unit make great focal points.

Peaceful retreat

The other big change was to my bedroom, which was a brand-new space created above the downstairs extension. I wanted a feminine, restful room that wasn't too girly but incorporated all my treasures, plus plenty of storage. Two elements I'm really pleased with are the shelving system I made by hanging a vintage ladder above the bed, and my spacious cupboard, which I had built around two vintage glazed French doors bought from an antiques shop in Norwich. Some people hate having their clothes on show but I quite like it – and it's a good incentive to keep everything neat and tidy!

Fresh new look

When all the building work was finished it was time for a makeover downstairs. A matching look just isn't me – it feels too clinical, but I ended up with a unified feel because I tend to go for the same warm grey, purple and neutral colours. I used two grey shades on the living room walls and started to paint the floor white but realised, with two children and a dog, it would show the dirt too much. So I painted it black and the room still feels spacious.

I've filled my rooms with a mix of items that I've picked up over the years. New »

Stylists at Home

CARON SAYS:

"Lara's use of pale blue and greys really make the most of the natural light in her home. I love her velvet sofa too – it adds texture."

Light & airy
Freja's room is a mix of vintage and retro styles – I love her Cath Kidston bedding. The desk and chair came from Ikea'

'The bathroom has two striking features – the vanity unit and the pink radiator. They're both real talking points'

Fab idea
'I replaced the glass in this set of windows with mirror'

» and mass-produced pieces don't really appeal to me; I love sourcing items from antiques fairs and charity shops. I like that you're always going to find a one-off buy, even if you don't get a bargain every time!

The wood-burning stove and purple wall colour in the snug, where the children and I have our computers, make the space feel really cosy. I upcycled a couple of pieces for this room: I covered a lampshade that I bought on eBay with a vintage map of Shropshire, which is where I grew up. An armchair that I'd had for a while needed reupholstering, so I took some French linen and vintage offcuts to the Chairs & Upholstery Shop in Tunbridge Wells and they gave it a new lease of life for me.

The home straight

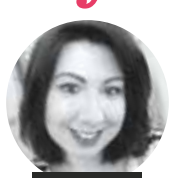
I decided not to change the layout of the kitchen when I extended, but I did want new units. I went for a smart, Shaker-style design in grey and pale-wood worktops – a classic look that I knew wouldn't date.

In the new dining room, I fitted a striking vertical radiator to make the most of the available space. Colour-wise, I chose the same nautral shade for the walls as I'd used in the kitchen for a cohesive look. The old dresser came from a nearby antiques shop and is just the right size for the room, with lots of space for my books and ornaments.

Future plans

The house is definitely a work in progress – the children's rooms need finishing off and, like many people who live in period homes, it has a few damp issues that need sorting. But I'm well on the way to getting everything just how I want it. My house is a really cosy, easy-to-live-with family home – just what I was after when I started house hunting all those years ago.'

Stylists *at Home*



HAYLEY SAYS:

'The vanity unit in Lara's bathroom is lovely and truly one of a kind. And the ladder above her bed is a great alternative to a bedside table.'

WORDS ANNA LAMBERT **STYLING** LAURIE DAVIDSON **PHOTOGRAPHS** DAVID GILES

Time to relax

'My bedroom is part of the new extension. I made a valance from gingham fabric to hide the clutter under my bed, which is from Feather & Black'

GREAT IDEA

'Plain bedding is affordable and easy to mix and match'

Make it

Show off trinkets in a framed display

PAGE 48

Lovely find

'I bought this chest when I lived in Australia'

Do it

Go for a smart vanity unit in your bathroom

PAGE 45

Wow factor

'The vanity unit was specially made and I had the radiator sprayed pastel pink'

Hit the shops

Where to go and what to buy to get Lara's style

✱ **FOR RECLAIMED PIECES** of furniture with a distressed finish, browse your local antique fairs, like Lara does. Or, check out Alexander & Pearl and Rockett St George for a great range of affordable pieces with a timeworn look.

✱ **CHOOSE FADED FLORALS** or plain linen for curtains like Lara's – Inspiration Direct sells ready-made ones from £180 for 130cm x 235cm design, while Laura Ashley's Peony Garden curtains in Amethyst cost from £115 for a 162cm x 137cm pair.

✱ **FIND A WIDE RANGE** of vintage-style tin advertising signs like Lara's at popartuk.com – the 40cm x 30cm 'It's delicious' cake design, £12.99, would look fab in a kitchen.

Get clicking Go to housetohome.co.uk/styleathome for more house tours

£9
LAURA ASHLEY
Channel a country vibe with this dishwasher-safe bone china Geranium mug

£1.99
DUNELM
Fill the Pansy Collection mug with hot chocolate and settle down on the sofa

£10.99
HINTONS HOME
Add vibrant colour with the Large Chinese Rose Red mug by PiP Studio

£6.50
CATH KIDSTON
Display the colourful Billie Paradise Flowers mug on a shelf when not in use

Buy Lara's look...

FLORAL MUGS

Treat yourself to a selection of cheery, colourful mugs and set them out for all to see, just like Lara has

Pretty collection

Sometimes, it's the little things in life that bring the simplest of pleasures and enjoying a comforting hot drink from your favourite mug is certainly up there. But if yours has an annoying chip or a worrying hairline crack, it's time to replace it with a new one. There are lots of fab mugs to choose from, and we've found 10 of the best floral designs – perfect for spring! From big blowsy blooms to ditsy vintage-style patterns, we've got a mug to suit everyone. And with prices starting from just £1.99, you can afford to have more than one favourite! Remember, if you're stuck for a present idea, mugs also make great gifts.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

£5
MARKS & SPENCER
Choose the understated monochrome design of the Etched Peony mug

£3.95
DOTCOM GIFTSHOP
Fall for the cute pattern on the Vintage Doily mug in Blue

£2
WILKO
Bring a retro vibe to tea time with this Folk Heart floral mug

£12 for four
NEXT
Go for the simple, understated look of the Pressed Petal mug

Bold look

£25
OCCA-HOME
Treat yourself to the Miranda Kerr Friendship design in fine bone china

£9
JOHN LEWIS
Swap your old mug for this elegant Joules Floral design

Style secrets

Pick the right mug and give it pride of place

- **MIX & MATCH** Decide whether you'd like a matching set of mugs or more of an eclectic look. If it's the latter, tie your collection together by buying designs with a similar pattern or ones that feature colours from the same palette.
- **STYLE CHOICE** Go for a less chunky design for spring and check the shape of the handle – your mug should be comfortable to hold, especially since you'll most likely be drinking hot drinks from it.
- **STAND OUT** Consider how you want to display your mugs. A wooden mug tree works well, as does open shelving, or try screwing hooks to the underside of a shelf to hang them from.
- **EACH TO THEIR OWN** Give each family member their own cup. Let each person pick a colour or pattern so that everyone has a favourite!

WORDS LAURIE DAVIDSON

Try Lara's idea...

INSTALL A VANITY UNIT

Create handy storage space and add style by choosing a practical and attractive washstand, just as Lara has done in her bathroom

We spend a lot of time and money giving our much-used bathrooms a makeover, and it's important to pick a vanity unit or washstand that's practical for you and your family. Whether you chose an enclosed design to create plenty of storage or give your bathroom a country vibe by making your own with a vintage table, a vanity unit can provide a charming focal point in your room.

Build or buy?

The first thing to decide is whether you are going to choose a ready-made unit or get hands-on and make your own from a table, or even from scratch. It may be best to create a customised unit if you have a tricky space to fill or want an interesting look. In a cottage, for example, you could create a rustic feel with doors made from reclaimed floorboards and chunky vintage hinges.

For a new unit head to specialist bathroom and DIY stores and look out for slimline designs and contemporary floating washstands that free up floor space. Remember, if you're going to make your own vanity unit, it's worth speaking to a professional plumber to make sure the sink can be connected to the pipework easily without too many unsightly exposed pipes.

Space saver

As well as providing a surface for your basin, one of the main perks of having a vanity unit is the storage it can provide. If you have a large family and endless bottles, towels and toys, consider a fully enclosed unit that provides maximum hidden storage. If you have the space, or adequate built-in storage already, you could choose an open style with a shelf for pretty wicker baskets to store your lotions and potions. These look particularly good in country-style schemes.

When planning what sort of vanity unit to go for, consider how you are going to use the rest of the space. Do a scale drawing or use an online planning tool to work out the layout and make the most of your gorgeous new bathroom.

STAND ALONE
For an old table to transform, try English Salvage, or convert a new French-style dressing table

Turn a beautiful antique desk into an elegant washstand

TIP *Create a splashback to complement your unit. Choose pretty patterned tiles for a country vibe, or go modern with large slate tiles.*

6 ways with... VANITY UNITS

Pick the right style for your bathroom and maximise the storage options

1 COUNTRY CHIC

Create a look similar to Lara by picking a partially open unit in a farmhouse style. Drawers provide some hidden storage and an open shelf is ideal for pretty boxes for toiletries. Long drawer handles are also great for hanging towels within easy reach of the sink.

BUY IT For similar handles, try the Matt Chrome Round Style cabinet D handles, £3.72 for L26.6cm (other sizes available), The Handle Studio.

2 PIPE DREAM

Stay sympathetic to a Victorian house by fitting a traditional chrome washstand. The bars can double up as towel rails, and the open design creates a feeling of space. A classic wicker basket is great for underneath storage.

BUY IT For this look in a small bathroom, try the Burlington Victorian Medium Basin with Chrome wash stand, £351.90, Bathroom Village.

3 PERIOD CHARM

Visit a salvage yard and look out for an antique washstand to revive. If your house is from a certain era, try and match up the style with the unit. It may need a bit of TLC, but after cleaning and a fresh coat of paint, you will be amazed at the transformation.

BUY IT Update with paint. Try Fired Earth Interior & Exterior Ultramarine Ashes Eggshell paint, £17.98 for 750ml, B&Q.

4 SPA STYLE

Create a streamlined look by building your own simple unit (or enlist the help of a builder) finished with the same tiles used for your bathroom walls. The clean lines, and a bowl-style basin create a spa-like feel. To soften the look, add baskets on an open shelf for your bath oils and fluffy towels, plus a scented candle for ultimate pampering.

BUY IT For similar woven baskets, try the Rush storage baskets, £14 set of two, Wilko.

5 DIVIDE & CONQUER

Get organised by using drawer dividers in your vanity unit. It's practical to have lots of storage, but nobody wants to see a jumbled mess of toiletries when they open the drawer. Vanity units from specialist companies often come with built-in organisation systems, but you can also create your own by buying dividers.

BUY IT Try the Billingen drawer insert, 80p, Ikea.

6 SEEING DOUBLE

Embrace the luxury of space if you are lucky enough to have it and choose a unit large enough for two basins. You will never be bumping elbows while cleaning your teeth again! Pick a unit with cupboard doors and you'll also create a wealth of space to stash away your bathroom paraphernalia.

BUY IT For a similar look, try the Hemnes/Odensvik washstand in Black-Brown stain, £305, Ikea.

WORDS SIAN TOMLINSON **PHOTOGRAPHS** TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

Make Lara's style...

FRAMED DISPLAY

Recreate Lara's look and show off treasured possessions in a 3D frame

Show off your favourite things in style by displaying them in compartments in a pretty box frame. It's easy to adapt this project to suit any scheme – why not experiment with several wallpaper designs and different paint effects, such as a two-tone or ombre finish?

HOW TO

YOU WILL NEED

- Sandpaper
- Damp cloth
- Bamboo cutlery tray, £9.50, Tesco Direct
- Paintbrush
- White & pink paint
- Ruler & pencil
- Scissors
- Wallpaper samples, Little Greene & Laura Ashley
- PVA glue
- Wooden frame, £6.99, Dunelm
- Strong glue

1 Lightly sand the sides and section dividers of the cutlery tray and wipe down. Paint with white paint and leave to dry. Apply a second coat.

2 Measure and cut out pieces of wallpaper to fit inside each section of the tray. Paint PVA glue inside each section and stick the wallpaper in place, smoothing out any air bubbles.

3 Paint the front edges of the section dividers and the surface of the wooden photo frame with pink paint. Once dry, fix the frame to the top of the tray with strong glue. Leave to dry.

Cost £16.49

PROJECT SUZIE ATTAWAY **STYLING** CASSIE PRYCE **PHOTOGRAPHS** DAVID GILES
SOFT TOY, £8, LAURA ASHLEY. COLOURING PENCILS, £1.50; STACKING BLOCKS, £12.95; BOTH DOTCOMGIFTSHOP

April LOVE IT

Wake up your home with a display of spring bulbs in vintage bottles and vases. Choose pure white and blue blooms for a fresh look.

Stylists at Home

ROSIE SAYS:

"The blue and white flowers work perfectly with the vintage silver and glass vases to create a pretty, romantic display that isn't fussy."

PHOTOGRAPH TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

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See page 16

Style at Home

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Stylish ADDITIONS

Whatever your style, it's easy to update your bedroom with just five key buys

Revamp your bedroom now that spring has finally sprung with one of this season's hottest looks. Whatever your style, we've got three gorgeous schemes that will give your bedroom a new lease of life. Turn the page to see our fab ideas that won't break the bank.

Tile print bed linen, £12 for a double duvet set; Bamboo pendant light, £17; Blue glass vase, £12; Ombre cushion, £7; Navy throw, £20; all George Home

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

THE LOOK	MIRROR	BED LINEN

BY THE SEA

Combine crisp white furniture with deep, azure-blue accents and natural textures

Stylists at Home

ROSIE SAYS:

"I'd accessorise this gorgeous beach house look with rose gold and stone accents. A wool blanket would be ideal for chilly evenings."

TACTILE DESIGN
Choose rustic materials. Driffield Rope mirror, £129, Very

ON THE TILES
Pick an eye-catching pattern. Tile print bed linen, £12 for a double duvet set, George Home

COUNTRY CHIC

Go for timeless wood, pretty florals and dusky shades for a modern twist on a classic look

Stylists at Home

KEELEY SAYS:

"I love wooden furniture – it's so tactile and looks great paired with lilac and green. This combo would feel welcoming in a bedroom."

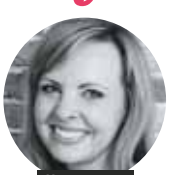
TIME TO REFLECT
Prop up on a dressing table. Dorchester pine wall mirror, £55, The Cotswold Company

PAINTERLY Fflorals
Fall for an elegant design. RJR.John Rocha bedding, £45 for a double duvet set, Debenhams

TRIBAL STYLE

Lift your space with punchy pattern, dark furniture and hints of opulent gold or copper

Stylists at Home



SARAH SAYS:

"I'm loving the criss-cross print on the cushion! These buys would look great set against deep-red, rust-coloured or amber walls."

PERFECT CIRCLE
Introduce shimmering metallics. Metal round mirror, £62, Littlewoods

FUNKY PRINT
Be bang on trend. Monochrome print bed linen, £18 for a double duvet cover, Sainsbury's

WORDS LAURIE DAVIDSON

BEDSIDE TABLE	LAMP	CUSHION

OH-SO CHIC
Go for clean, simple lines.
Tiana bedside chest, £249,
Marks & Spencer

LIGHT UP
Cast a subtle glow.
Harriet Bottle White Wash
lamp, £24.99, Dunelm

BLURRED LINES
Include inky-blue shades.
Silk Tie & Dye Shibori
cushion, £39.50, In-Spaces

WONDERFUL WOOD
Add warmth with versatile pine.
Wilton bedside table, £150
set of two, John Lewis

MARVELLOUS MAUVE
Soften the look with shapely
curves. Plum Crackle
table lamp, £32, Next

SQUARE DEAL
Style your bed with pretty
designs. Dusty Palmer Chenille
cushion, £6, Matalan

DEEP SHADE
Work a colonial vibe.
Cubist Dark Wood bedside
table, £255, Oka Direct

SIMPLE STRIPES
Mix and match textures. Mali
Scratch ceramic table
lamp, £45, Tesco Direct

CRISS CROSS
Wake up your bed.
Crewel Stitch Monochrome cushion,
£65, House of Fraser

Craft Easter ACCESSORIES

Be inspired by the delights of spring and have a go at our easy-to-follow ideas to give your home a dash of seasonal charm

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Whether it's a gift for family or a decorative touch for your own home, these simple projects are sure to add to the celebratory mood this Easter. Introduce florals for a feminine touch and bring natural textures, such as moss and hessian, into your styling for a rustic finish.

Easter nest

Pretty up your dining table with this cute display

YOU WILL NEED

- Twigs or raffia
- Clothes pegs
- Thin wire
- Scissors
- Moss & plant bulbs

1 Take a handful of twigs or raffia around 35cm long. Bend them into a wreath shape and secure in place with pegs. Cut several pieces of thin wire and wrap at intervals around the wreath to hold it together. Remove pegs.

2 Trim away any loose ends until you're happy with the overall shape. Take another handful of twigs or raffia and form into a flat circle to fit into the bottom of your nest.

3 Push this flat circle into the nest, to act as a base, and use wire to secure it to the outer wreath. Fill your nest with moss, potted plants and seasonal accessories to suit your look. Display on a cake stand and pop on a table.

Stylists *at Home*

HAYLEY SAYS:

"I love Easter! I always have the family over for a roast dinner with all the trimmings, so I'll definitely be attempting the centrepiece."

Gift bags

Present home-made treats in a rustic pouch

YOU WILL NEED

- Hessian fabric, £4.60 per m, The Cotton Patch
- Turquoise organza ribbon, £3 for 5m, John Lewis
- Rabbit print tree charm, £15, Northern Logic at Notonthehighstreet.com
- Fabric scissors & pins
- Sewing machine

1 Cut a rectangle of hessian 15cm x 30cm. Fold in half to form a pouch shape and pin in place. Use a sewing machine to stitch up the two sides, remembering to leave the top open.

2 Turn the pouch the right way round and push out the corners using a knitting needle. Fill your gift bag with treats and gather the fabric at the top. Tie on a decorative ribbon to seal the opening and add a cute charm or label as a final flourish.

Got 10 minutes?

POMPOM CHICKS Use a pompom maker to create a little ball of yellow fluff and stick on eyes. Cut a small triangle of orange felt for the beak and attach. Make several and display along the mantelpiece, or use as place settings at the table.

BUNNY ENVELOPES Jazz up plain envelopes by cutting out bunny ears from white card. Glue these to the back of the envelope, at the top, so they poke over the edge. Make the inside of the ears by trimming smaller shapes from pink card and sticking on top of the white pieces.

TEACUP GARDEN Take a selection of vintage teacups and cut a clear plastic bag to fit the inside each one as a lining. Plant up flowering crocus bulbs, along with moss and soil in your teacups. Water regularly and display on a windowsill for Easter.

Quick idea

EASTER EGG + PRETTY FABRIC = PERSONALISED GIFT WRAP

Take a chocolate Easter egg, wrapped in plastic, and cut a square of fabric large enough to cover it. Gather the material at the top of the egg and secure with a piece of co-ordinating ribbon in a pretty bow.

TIP *Choose muted greens and blues for a sophisticated twist on Easter pastels.*

Wreath card holder

Showcase Easter cards in this seasonal floral decoration

YOU WILL NEED

- Willow wreath, £14.50, Cox & Cox
- Thick wire
- Wire cutters
- Glue gun
- Oasis foam
- brick, £1.39, Hobbycraft
- Oasis flower tape, £2, Hobbycraft
- Foliage & flowers

1 Take your willow wreath and cut pieces of wire to fit in a grid pattern in the middle. Cut them 2cm longer than the gap so they can be secured to the wreath using a glue gun.

2 Cut the foam brick into small strips (each around 3-4cm deep) and submerge in water. Attach to the front of the wreath using floral tape.

3 Cut the stems of your foliage and flowers and push them into the foam gently. Start with a layer of thicker foliage and finish with delicate bloom heads.

WORDS CASSIE PRYCE PHOTOGRAPHS TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

Living room makeover

Display flowers

Wreaths aren't just for Christmas. Make the most of seasonal blooms by arranging your favourites on a simple foam circle.
For similar, try the Faux Floral Dried Country wreath, £12, Sainsbury's

Add painterly watercolours

Inject a feminine touch with watercolour-print cushions. Look for large-scale floral designs in pinks and purples.
For similar, try the Jeanie Floral cushion, £25, Marks & Spencer

Brighten the look

Pick a pale floor colour to give your room a light and airy feel. Whitewashed floorboards will open up the space and reflect light.
For similar, try Whitewashed Oak Effect vinyl plank flooring, £25 per sq m, B&Q

Arrange china

Lay your table for tea with dainty crockery in pastel shades. Then, fill bowls with chocolate eggs and serve delicious homemade cakes.
For similar, try Vintage China cake stand, £29.95, Dotcomgiftshop

Room recipe

Lighten with PRETTY PASTELS

Mix sorbet shades with delicate florals for a fresh and uplifting scheme that's perfect for a relaxed springtime look

Paste up texture

Go for a panel-effect wallpaper to give your spring styling a rustic backdrop. A pale design will allow pastels to pop. **For similar, try Wood Panel 8951-10 in Off White, £19.99 per roll, Wallpaperdirect**

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

SWEET STYLE Choose accessories in spring colours to continue the look. Small American Milk glass cake stand, £29, REfound Objects

Style *this* LOOK

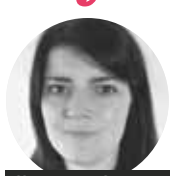
1 DUSKY SHADE Ribbed vase, £15, George Home

2 TEA FOR TWO Vintage Tea Party Teapot in Blue, £19.50, Bombay Duck

3 IN BLOOM Floral cushion, £12, BHS

TIP *Use glassware in varying heights to add interest to your Easter display.*

Stylists *at Home*



CHARLOTTE SAYS: "This room is happy and reminds me that summer is just around the corner! I really like the wreath – it's a lovely way to add colour to a space."

WORDS CASSIE PRYCE PHOTOGRAPHS TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

CREATE CHARACTER

Make the most of existing features like a dado rail, by hanging paper above and painting the wall underneath. Pick a colourful hue from the wallpaper for a rich contrast or a neutral shade for a more subtle effect.

Orchid Apple Green Floral wallpaper, £39 per roll, Laura Ashley

DIP-DYE WALLS

Experiment with how you paint your walls, and you could end up with a truly individual look. Layer up your accent colour over the top of a neutral cream, and dry-brush half way up the wall for a dip-dye effect.

MixLab Copper Blush and MixLab 10YY83/071 matt paint; both £24.29 for 2.5ltr, Dulux

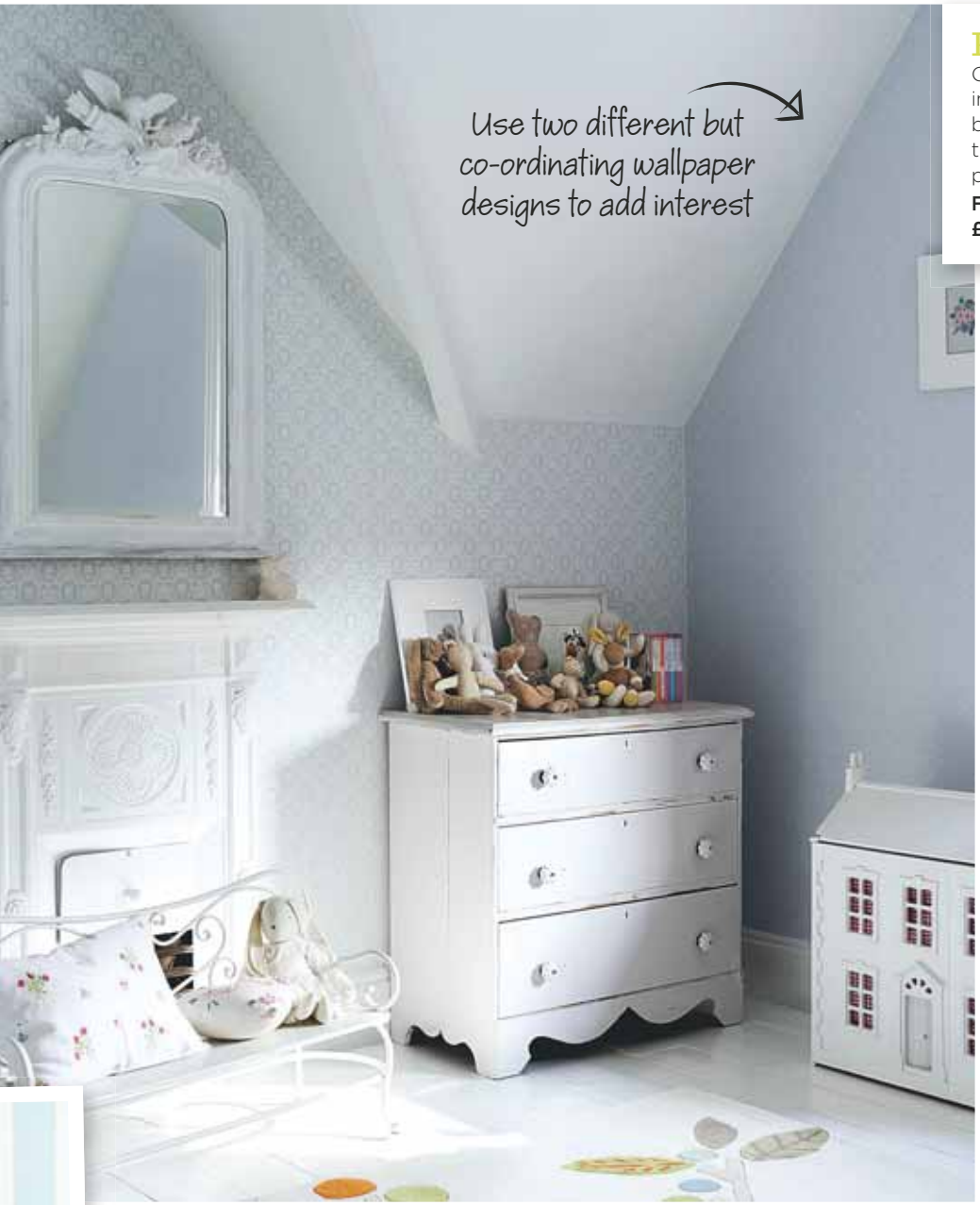
Get creative with WALLPAPER & PAINT

Bring your home to life by using colour and pattern to transform your walls

Neutral and plain walls are a good starting point from which to build a decorating scheme, but if you ignore the spectrum of colours and patterns available in paint and wallpaper, you could be missing out.

Perfect pattern

Many brands now produce both wallpaper and paint, so tricky decisions are often already made for you when it comes to creating perfectly co-ordinated combinations. New wallpaper designs come out every season, but when picking a pattern you need to be conscious that you will be living with it for at least a couple of years. Florals and simple geometrics will never go out of style, so are a good choice if you find a design you love. Choose a tonal two-colour pattern if you want to play it safe, and pair with a neutral paint to tone down the overall effect.



PAIR UP DESIGNS

Choose two wallpaper patterns for an individual look. Here a stylised floral sits beautifully alongside a subtle polka dot in the same shade of blue because the different proportions of the designs work so well.

Floral Damask Motif Blue, Polka Dot Blue; £29.95 per roll, Galerie at Wallpaperdirect

PLAY WITH PAINT

Pick an accent colour from the paper's design, and use this to paint an adjoining wall. It'll anchor the scheme, and stop the overall look from being too fussy.

Flower Power Coral and Teal wallpaper, £9.95 per roll, Wilko. For a similar paint try Colour Blast matt emulsion in Jelly Bean, £16.75 per 2.5ltr, Wilko

For more ideas for using wallpaper and paint see our boards at pinterest.com/styleathomemag/

TIP *Buy wallpaper rolls with the same batch number for colour consistency.*

MATCH UP WOODWORK

Go bold with wallpaper in a wide stripe design reminiscent of beach huts and rock candy for a light and summery feel. Pick a colour that matches a shade in the stripe design, and paint the skirting board for a fully co-ordinated finish.

Promenade Teal Band Stripe wallpaper, £15 per roll, Next

3 combos TO TRY

1 BEAUTIFUL BIRDS Phoebe by Albany, £11.99 per roll, Wallpaperdirect, with Albany Morning Breeze 6048 Vinyl Matt Emulsion, £25.84 for 2.5ltr, Designerpaint.co.uk

2 FIFTIES FLORAL Spring Trail Duck Egg Blue Floral, £39 per roll, Laura Ashley, with Dulux Mint Macaroon matt emulsion paint, £26.99 for 2.5ltr, Homebase

3 CHIC CHEVRON Scion Groove Marine Moss 110853, £32.95 per roll, Fashionwallpaper.co.uk, with Natural Green Matt Emulsion, £13.95 for 2.5ltr, Wilko

WORDS SIAN TOMLINSON

April MAKE IT

Create a feature wall with a patchwork of wallpaper samples, all on a similar theme. Start with an alcove or area behind a console.

Arrange your favourite china to link in with this pretty look

Stylists at Home

CHARLOTTE SAYS:

"This is a lovely project, and using smaller pieces of wallpaper makes it more manageable, too. It'd also work on the inside of a glass cabinet."

PHOTOGRAPH TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

Fall in love with your KITCHEN-DINER

Whether you want to give your kitchen-diner a brand-new look, make the space feel more cohesive or fit in a table, we've got it covered! »

My room...

ABOUT ME I'm Emma Cullen, 34, and live with my husband Charles, and six-year-old daughter Emily, in a bungalow in Cambridgeshire.

MY CHALLENGE The kitchen was at the front of the bungalow looking out on to the road and it was really small. As the cost of a new kitchen was so high we decided to change the layout at the same time and create a room we could enjoy as a family.

MY WISHLIST I wanted a bright, modern kitchen that would have room for a dining table so we could enjoy meals together.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

'It was once the garage!'

Stylist at Home Emma, 34, from Cambridgeshire used an unlikely space for her kitchen-diner

Charles and I were living in north London but had to commute to Bedfordshire for our veterinary business, and travelling was a bit of a nightmare,' says Emma. 'We'd been looking to buy a property near the practice when this bungalow came up for sale in the perfect location in nearby Cambridgeshire. It did need renovating but we felt it could work for us.

My biggest bugbear was the kitchen, as it was small and there wasn't room for a dining table. We had lots of ideas, including turning the bungalow into a two-bedroom house or building a small garden extension, but we soon realised money was going to be a huge issue. After talking to a local builder, he suggested we convert the double-length garage into a kitchen-diner, which would be a fraction of the cost.

Building & moving

The main entrance to the garage was next to the front door, so we built a large glass porch across the front of the house to create a new entrance, which would lead into the kitchen. We added a dividing brick wall at the end of the space to create a smaller garage behind the kitchen, and fitted a patio door to open out onto the garden. Once the walls had been plastered and were drying we could instantly see how much better our kitchen was going to be.

Getting the look

The hardest part was working out what style of kitchen I wanted, as we had a very tight budget. A friend suggested I try Howdens and I'm thrilled I did as we found a lovely design with white glossy units, which reflect light around the room beautifully. We planned the layout carefully with the help of a kitchen fitter and, best of all, the final price included the fitted appliances. Because our budget was so tight we didn't have enough money to buy any more wall units but we both decided we could add to them at a later date, or we could put up a few shelves if we wanted.

Colour with confidence

The icing on the cake is the fabulous wallpaper – it really brings the room to life and stands out in this otherwise neutral space. I had seen the design in different colourways but I love red and really wanted to use it in the kitchen. We then finished off the room with the round white table from Ikea, and chose funky chairs in red and white to add a burst of colour.' »

Light & airy

'We laid the oak-effect laminate flooring lengthways to give the illusion of a longer room. The Brighton wallpaper is by Harlequin'

KITCHEN-DINER special

STYLE TIP

'Choose a wallpaper that really sets the scene. This funky design makes a fab feature'

TOTAL £5,200

Turn over for my shopping list

KITCHEN-DINER special

Sleek look

'The black splashback behind the hob breaks up the neutral walls'

2

Wonder walls

'I'd seen this wallpaper in another colour and when I discovered it also came in red I knew it was a must-have for my kitchen'

5

Drink up

'I love to have quirky accessories and this brilliant printed water bottle and glasses match my colour scheme perfectly'

My project step by step

Discover how Emma transformed a cramped space into a modern, family-friendly kitchen-diner

1 First steps

We check to see if the existing double-length garage is suitable to turn into a kitchen-diner and what planning regulations we need to follow. When we get the go ahead, we employ a local building company to do the work for us.

2 Building begins

The conversion gets underway and the walls are knocked down at the front of the house to create a larger hallway. A new wall is put up internally at the back of the garage, while another is knocked down to make space for patio doors that lead out to the garden. The plasterer gets to work and the space is really starting to take shape – it looks amazing.

3 Choosing the units

It's time to decide which units to pick and I've got no idea what I want. I look through a few magazines for ideas and then a friend recommends we visit Howdens where we are inspired by a galley-style layout with white glossy units and a black worktop. We decide to add a curved unit at the end of a run to add interest. The units arrive a few weeks later and the fitting begins.

4 Laying the flooring

The kitchen is fitted and I'm impressed with the speed, but then I start to panic as I think we may need more wall units. Charles suggests we buy extra at a later date, when we have some spare cash. Next, I find some gorgeous oak-effect laminate flooring, which we lay lengthways to make the room appear longer.

5 Finishing touches

I find the funky wallpaper and use it to create a feature of the end wall – I hang it by myself! I'm really pleased with the result. We decide against blinds as we want to ensure the room stays light and airy. We paint the walls a soft cream shade and use accessories to add colour to the room. I settle for a white table and pair it with funky cafe-style red and white chairs, which our daughter Emily loves!

Smooth style

'To add interest we fitted a curved unit. It looks really classy and breaks up the straight angles of the units'

Super scarlet
'The pop of red really shows off the shiny slate-effect tops and adds warmth to the white units'

1

GREAT IDEA
'Use a drying rack on your draining board to maximise space'

3

4

Here's my shopping list

Clarkenwell White Gloss **units,** from £56 for 600mm, Howdens. IT Kitchens Basalt Slate laminate **worktop,** £132 for 3.6m; Astracast Altro stainless-steel 1.5 **sink and drainer,** £89.99; Cooke & Lewis Dalmuir monobloc mixer **tap,** £43; Milano oak-effect laminate **flooring,** £15 per 1.25m; all B&Q. Zanussi ZPVF4130X **oven** and ceramic **hob** pack, £312.97; Matrix **extractor hood,** £74.98; both Appliances Direct. **Walls** painted in Jasmine White Kitchen+ Matt paint, £24.49 for 2.5 ltr, Dulux. Brighton **wallpaper,** £46 per roll, Harlequin at Wallpaperdirect. Docksta **table,** £130; Urban **chairs** in White, £25 each; Frode folding **chairs** in Red, £20 each; Iris **tea towels,** £2.75 for two; all Ikea. De'Longhi Distinta **kettle** in Bronze, £99.95; Filter **coffee machine,** £99.95; both **John Lewis.** Red Spectrum kitchen **canisters,** £3.99 each; **mug tree,** £5.99; dotty **oven gloves** in Red, £5.99; Cut felt flower **place mats,** £1.99 each; all Dunelm. Heart wire **drainer,** £15, Next. Novo Red **bread bin,** £55.99; Teal bubble **mugs,** £35.99 for six; all Typhoon Homewares. Cream **compost pot,** £14.99; Cream **utensil pot,** £9.99; both Lakeland. Retro **water bottle,** £10; **glasses,** £4.50 each; all Not Just Jugs

Get *Emma's* kitchen LOOK

Mix and match red and cream accessories

BOLD PRINT
Brighton wallpaper, £46 per roll, What a Hoot collection by Harlequin at Wallpaperdirect

SEASON IN STYLE
Spectrum collection salt and pepper mill, £9.99 for two, Dunelm

TIME FOR TEA
De'Longhi Distinta bronze kettle, £99.95, John Lewis

POT LUCK
Cream utensil pot, £9.99, Lakeland

HAVE A HEART
Wire drainer, £15, Next

Stylists *at Home*

CARON SAYS:
'Emma's kitchen looks really fresh – the funky red and white scheme creates a fun family atmosphere for eating and socialising.'

WORDS ZOE OLIVER
PHOTOGRAPHS LIZZIE ORME

'My red range is the star!'

For *Stylist at Home* Victoria, 43, from east London, relocating her kitchen was an inspired decision

GREAT IDEA
'Go for Shaker-style units to give your kitchen a modern-country look'

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Twice the size

'Moving the kitchen to the back of the house was the best thing we could have done. It's light and spacious and the Homebase units give us lots of storage'

My room...

MEET VICTORIA

ABOUT ME I'm Victoria Scott, 43, and I live with my husband Pete and our children, Michael, 15, Henry, 13, and Alexandra, nine, in a six-bedroom Edwardian house in Wanstead, east London.

MY CHALLENGE Our kitchen was the smallest room in the house with no windows. It was in totally the wrong place.

MY WISH LIST I've always wanted a large kitchen that's big enough for a table and chairs, so the room is full of conversation. I also wanted plenty of storage space so I no longer had cluttered worktops.

Before

TOTAL £5,987

Turn over for my shopping list

Colour code

'We picked out the sky blue of one of the wall tiles and matched it to a fabric for the blind. The striking laminate flooring came from the Homebase sale'

Cooking in my cramped kitchen was a nightmare – I didn't even have space for all my appliances,' says Victoria. 'The fridge was under the stairs, the cupboard space was practically non-existent and the room had no natural light. Then our boiler broke, which was the final straw. We had always loved the room at the back of our house, which has lovely Edwardian windows and doors facing the garden, so we decided to move the kitchen there.

Wheels in motion

We explained our plans to a local builder and he assured us that relocating the kitchen was straightforward. My red range cooker, which I'd bought a few years previously, was going to be the focal point of my new kitchen, but other than that we had to design the scheme from scratch.

Peter and I took full advantage of the January sales and found a fab kitchen at Homebase – as soon as I saw the cream Shaker-style units I knew they would be perfect. We paired them with walnut-effect laminate flooring and Laura Ashley wall tiles, all of which were reduced at Homebase. Although I love granite worktops, I couldn't justify spending thousands of pounds on them, so I went for a composite quartz design after researching them online.

Dream come true

A week before the kitchen arrived our builder fitted a new window where I could position the sink, took out the fireplace to make way for the range cooker and laid the floor. Shortly after, he fitted the units and worktops – it was a great feeling seeing my dream kitchen come together!

I love that we can all sit down as a family to eat, chat and socialise. The old kitchen was so tiny that this was never possible, so we usually ate in front of the TV. Now we all congregate here at the end of the day, which is what I've always wanted.' »

KITCHEN-DINER special

1

Good plan

'The kitchen adviser at Homebase helped us design the best layout for our space, with lots of different door and drawer options'

5

Soft shades

'Pastel crockery and table linen complement the wall tiles and add a light, fresh feel'

Stylists *at Home*

SARAH SAYS:

'Victoria's kitchen manages to look both smart and informal – it must be a real contrast to her old one. I love the coloured wall tiles, too.'

My project step by step

Victoria explains how she achieved her homely kitchen, with her beloved range cooker at its heart

1 Time for a change

We know that drastic measures are needed to achieve our dream kitchen, and a broken boiler is the catalyst to start the work. Our kitchen, sandwiched between the living and dining rooms, is dark and cramped, so we decide to move it to another room completely. The space at the back of the house is bigger and benefits from lots of natural light – so this is where our new kitchen will go.

2 Preparing the space

We speak to a builder about moving the kitchen and he tells us it's relatively easy to do. He spends a few weeks preparing the room, replacing a large window for a smaller one above the sink and taking out the fireplace in the chimney breast, ready for my range cooker to slot in and make a fabulous focal point.

3 Choosing the units

As soon as I see a lovely off-white Shaker-style kitchen in Homebase, I know it's the one for me. It's perfect for the modern-country look I'm hoping to create and is also reduced in the January sales – brilliant! An in-house kitchen designer advises us on the best layout for our needs, plus the range of cabinet sizes available.

4 Essential buys

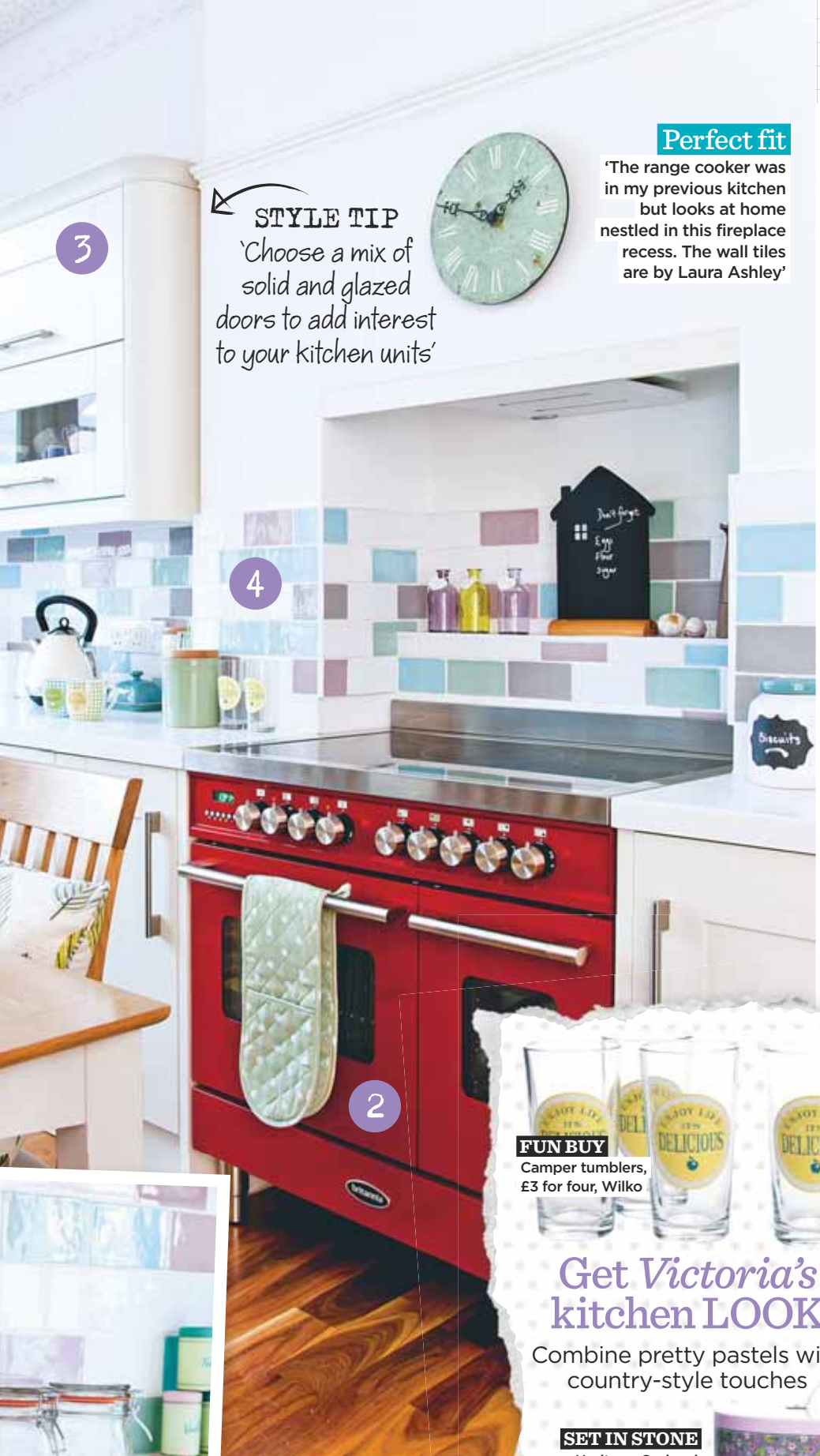
As Homebase was such good value for money, we also buy the laminate flooring, pastel Laura Ashley wall tiles, plus the sink and tap from there. Granite worktops would be ideal but they're just too expensive, so I go for a white composite quartz design instead, which helps keep the space feeling light and airy. I pick out a sky blue shade in the tiles and have a Roman blind made up in the same colour.

5 Personalising the space

I stick with the pastel theme and find crockery, storage canisters and kitchen linens in these shades to tie the look together. Finally, I pop our dining table and chairs in the middle of the room, making it the sociable, family-friendly room I had my heart set on. I couldn't be happier.

Wash & go

'I find stainless-steel sinks a bit clinical, so I went for a white composite design from Homebase. It's really practical and looks great, too'



Perfect fit

'The range cooker was in my previous kitchen but looks at home nestled in this fireplace recess. The wall tiles are by Laura Ashley'

Here's my shopping list

Audley kitchen **units** in Bone, £4,290; Schock **sink,** £229; single-lever **tap,** £159; Walnut laminate **flooring,** £9.50 per sq m; Laura Ashley **wall tiles** in White, Amethyst, Cobblestone, Duck Egg and Eau de Nil, £12.99 per sq m (all sale prices); all Homebase. White Quartz Omega Gloss **worktop,** £189 for a 4,100mm x 600mm length, Kitchen Worktops Online. Bosch **dishwasher,** £349.99, Currys. Alba **dining table,** £375; Alba **dining chairs,** £99 each; all John Lewis. Roman **blind** in Panama, £94, Direct Blinds. Countess **clock,** £30, Newgate. Dandelion Clocks **table runner,** £7.99; Cream **jug,** £7.99; **cushions,** from £6.39 each; Sage Dotty **oven glove,** £4.49; all Dunelm. Bella Dots **kettle,** £39.99, BHS. Heritage four-piece **dinner set,** £30; Small Heritage Orchard **jug,** £21; all Denby. Camper **cutlery,** £10 for a 16-piece set; Camper **chalkboard jars,** from £3 each; Camper **tumblers,** £3 for four; all Wilko. Eden Stoneware **storage jars,** £19.99 for three, Argos. **Cake stand,** £18, Next. Clip-top 1ltr **Kilner jars,** £10.99 for three; House **chalkboard,** £16.99; all Lakeland. **Framed letters,** £18.75 for seven, Prezzybox

WORDS & STYLING EMMA FISHMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS LIZZIE ORME

Write on!

'I love to keep everything organised now that there's plenty of space. These chalkboard labels are from Lakeland and can be stuck to any jar or container'

FUN BUY
Camper tumblers, £3 for four, Wilko

SPRING FRESH
Green New Forest cushion, £12.99, Dunelm

Get *Victoria's* kitchen LOOK

Combine pretty pastels with country-style touches

SET IN STONE
Heritage Orchard small jug, £21, Denby

DITSY PRINT
Stack of two cake tins, £15, Next

LEAVE A MESSAGE
House table chalkboard, £16.99, Wilko

Make the most of your kitchen-diner

Separate or link your space so it works best for you with our clever tips to help you realise its full potential

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

1 Mark out distinct zones

Choosing two different flooring styles is one of the most obvious ways to divide a kitchen-diner. As they are both high-traffic spaces, go for hardwearing materials, such as ceramic tiles and wood, or consider vinyl in both spaces, but with contrasting patterns or colours. To make the distinction even clearer, why not add an edging strip between the two types of flooring?

Turquoise Parquet flooring, £47.89 per m sq, Harvey Maria

2 Use the same furniture

If you have an open-plan kitchen-diner, continue similar-style kitchen units or furniture through to the dining area to unite the spaces. Nowadays, many kitchen manufacturers have a range of units that are more adaptable to open-plan living and include shelving or open units that can sit comfortably in a dual-purpose setting.

Esker kitchen, around £3,400 for a typical eight-unit design, Wickes

3 Separate with colour

Create a clear divide between your kitchen and dining spaces by using the walls to good advantage. If your kitchen is monochrome, for example, add colour or pattern to the dining area with a bold painted feature wall or striking mural. Check out Surface View for a wide range of designs, from £60 per sq m. Alternatively, choose tonal colours that are several shades apart, such as sky blue and cobalt, for a cohesive feel that remains distinct.

4 Unite with flooring

Laying the same flooring in both spaces creates a seamless link between the two. A solid block of colour can look very effective and will draw attention to a large expanse of floor, creating the illusion of space. Solid, laminate or vinyl wood planks will lengthen a room and are especially suited to galley layouts and small spaces.

Avenue Ultimate Timber Tavel wood-effect vinyl, £24 per sq m, Avenue Floors

Stylists *at Home*

CARON SAYS:

"I'd use the same flooring to link a kitchen-diner. To soften the look in the dining space, add a colourful rug that matches your kitchen scheme."

TIP *Invest in quiet appliances and a powerful extractor hood for open-plan areas to stop noise and smells affecting mealtimes.*

KITCHEN-DINER special

5 Create a barrier

If you don't have a dividing wall in your kitchen-diner but want to physically separate the spaces, consider interior wooden doors with glass inserts. They will create a distinct boundary and block out noise but not vision or light. For a quirkier, less permanent barrier, shutter-style doors give the option of switching between two separate rooms and an open-plan space. **Take a look at Shutterly Fabulous, or try fretwork panels, from £55.71 per m, Jali**

6 Continue the colour

Just as paint or wallpaper can be used to clearly define two zones, it can also seamlessly link rooms. Neutrals or whites are ideal colour choices as a large expanse of these shades won't overpower a kitchen-diner, unlike vast swathes of bold colour. If wallpaper is your thing, use the same pattern on a feature wall in both your dining and kitchen spaces to show that the two spaces were designed as a whole.

7 Divide with an island

In larger kitchen-diners, an island unit is a great option as it offers extra storage and prep space, while acting as a natural barrier that defines the busy work area of the kitchen and the calmer dining space. An island is also perfect if you love to entertain, as it still allows interaction with the adjoining room, while preventing guests getting under the cook's feet. **Metod kitchen cabinets, from £43 for a 600mm base unit with shelves, Ikea**

8 Duplicate lighting styles

Use the same lighting throughout the entire space for a uniform feel. For example, fit a large pendant light to the centre of each room at the same height, if possible, as this will draw the eye in a line from the kitchen to the dining room. Then, add discreet spotlights under wall units in the kitchen to give direct task lighting when prepping food. Check out John Lewis and BHS for a wide range.

9 Section off an area

A glass screen is a simple solution for subtly dividing a space without blocking out natural light. The beauty of glass is that it can be left clear, decorated or etched, all of which offer differing levels of privacy. Another option is a glass sliding door – great for completely separating rooms when entertaining or to create a cosier family space. Take a look at Go Glass.

10 Link with accessories

Finishing touches will tie a space together. Pick items in the same material, or make the most of an existing vintage china collection, for example, and display it in both rooms. Window treatments and textiles make a difference, so use the same design on curtains and blinds and buy or sew your own seat pads for dining chairs in a fabric colour picked out from your blinds.

WORDS KATE PARKIN **PHOTOGRAPHS** TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

SIT AT THE ISLAND

Most kitchen islands are designed with a worktop overhang, so add bar-height stools (or chairs with backs for extra support) to turn a kitchen island into a casual dining space. This is a great option if you love to socialise while cooking.

For similar bar chairs, try the Pemberley design, £129 each, John Lewis.

CHANGE THE SHAPE

If you want a kitchen table but don't have space for a large rectangular or square design, go for a smaller round, bistro one instead. Pop it against a wall or in a snug corner of your kitchen.

For similar, try the Round Marble Top Bistro table, £120, Dooley's Furniture.

Find room for a table

Fitting a dining area into your kitchen or living space, no matter how small, is easy with our tips

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Having somewhere to sit down and eat is an important element to consider when designing your home. Many of us don't have the luxury of a separate dining room, but that doesn't mean we need to resort to TV dinners. With our nifty ideas, it's easy to work a table into your space.

Smart solutions

Look at your existing space and see if any part of it can be reworked to incorporate a dining area. For example, if you have a tiny kitchen but a large hallway, could part of it be used as a dining space? If none of your rooms can be repurposed, try a table with an extendable section that can be folded away when not in use. Or, for really compact spaces, invest in a clever drop-leaf design, which can be used for display by day, then convert into a dining table at dinner time.

USE A WINDOW SEAT

Make the most of every nook, and the period features of your home, by using a window seat as dining seating. The built-in bench means your table can sit almost flush to the wall, saving valuable space.

For made-to-measure seating options, try Window Seat Cushions.

KITCHEN-DINER special

Get the most out of your island by popping a seat at the end, as well as the side

WORK YOUR WALLS

Even if you think you have no space for a dining table, there is always a solution. A fold-down wall-mounted design can turn a small patch of bare wall into a cosy dining area that would work in even the most compact home. Add a wall-mounted lamp for mood lighting in the evenings.

Norbo wall-mounted drop-leaf table, £29; Vilmar chairs, £30 each; Forhoja wall cabinets in Birsh, £16 each; all Ikea.

TIP *Pick a compact pedestal table and stools to make best use of space in a corner.*

PICK YOUR POSITION

There are no rules to say that a dining table has to be placed in the middle of a room. When space is at a premium, put it against a wall and tuck chairs snugly underneath to minimise the space they take up. Style the table with accessories, such as a vase of flowers, to make its position feel established.

For a similar jug, try the Stoneware Milk design, £18.50, Notonthehighstreet.com.

Stylists *at Home*

KEELEY SAYS:

"Being able to sit down for a family meal is important, and these ideas are great. The table that folds down from the wall is especially clever."

WORDS SIAN TOMLINSON **PHOTOGRAPHS** TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

Freestanding

£844 DEBENHAMS

CANDY TRIO9503X
Type Single fan oven and dishwasher **Capacity** 39 ltr/six place settings **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H85cm x W60cm x D60cm **Features** Ceramic hob, multi-function oven with grill, five wash settings

BUY IT... to have a dishwasher, even in the smallest kitchen. It's a little on the pricey side, but extremely convenient.

£399 AO

NEW WORLD NW601GDOL
Type Gas double conventional oven with electric grill **Capacity** 69 ltr/39 ltr **Energy rating** n/a (gas ovens don't have ratings) **Dimensions** H90cm x W60cm x D60cm **Features** Easy-clean enamel, gas safety lid, seven colours available

BUY IT... if you're a keen baker. Gas retains moisture better, so won't dry out dishes.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Get creative with a

Release your inner *MasterChef* and invest in one of the latest range-style and

The traditional cooker has fallen out of favour in recent years, with built-in appliances becoming the norm. However, freestanding all-in-one designs have a huge amount to offer even if you're short on space and sticking to a tight budget.

Combining a single or double oven and grill with either a gas, electric or induction hob makes a freestanding cooker the ultimate in multi-function appliances. Plus, your cooking zone will be contained to just one area and, with sizes starting from 50cm wide, they're ideal for a compact kitchen.

Freestanding flexibility

The other advantage is that they're also easier and cheaper to install than built-in appliances, as they can simply slot between existing cabinets without the need for cutting holes in expensive worktops or buying new cupboards.

But, spend a little more and you could transform your kitchen with one of the latest great-value 90cm range cookers. Many of these offer professional looks and capacity with a range of features but without the hefty price tag. They're also perfect if you love to entertain and a great way to add colour to your kitchen.

£649 JOHN LEWIS

JLFSEC610 ELECTRIC COOKER IN GLOSS BLACK
Type Double electric fan **Capacity** 60 ltr/31 ltr **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H90cm x W60cm x D60cm **Features** Six main oven functions, easy-clean enamel liners, ceramic hob

BUY IT... for its streamlined looks with freestanding flexibility.

£599 BOOTS

SMEG SUK61MX8
Type Dual-fuel multi-function oven **Capacity** 79 ltr **Energy rating** A -10% **Dimensions** H88.7cm x W60cm x D60cm **Features** Seven oven functions, full-width electric grill, programmable clock/timer

BUY IT... for a host of useful features (including a pizza stone), and its stainless-steel, professional-style looks.

FOCAL POINT Create a homely feel with the Classic 60cm cooker, £799, Rangemaster

new cooker

freestanding cookers for your kitchen

£799 ZANUSSI

ZCI68300XA INDUCTION COOKER
Type Double electric fan **Capacity** 74 ltr/34 ltr **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H90cm x W60cm x D60cm **Features** Induction hob, programmable timer, five shelf positions, catalytic liners

BUY IT... if you've a large family. It has more capacity than many ovens the same size.

£479 HUGHES

BEKO BDVI668
Type Double electric fan oven **Capacity** 65 ltr/35 ltr **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H90cm x W60cm x D60cm **Features** Four-zone induction hob, easy-clean catalytic liners, LED timer

BUY IT... if you're after the speed and efficiency of induction cooking, as well as excellent value for money.

£635 CURRYS

STOVES RICHMOND MINI RANGE COOKER 550DFW
Type Dual-fuel electric double fan oven **Capacity** 69 ltr/39 ltr **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H90cm x W55.2cm x D60.2cm **Features** Four-burner gas hob, electric grill, storage compartment, LED timer

BUY IT... to get the traditional look of a range cooker even if you're short on space.

ESSENTIAL FEATURES

✓ **DIMENSIONS** Cookers are available in 50cm, 55cm and 60cm widths. Most models are 60cm wide and these are big enough to fit four large pans on the hob.

✓ **ENERGY** All ovens are rated A-G according to their efficiency. Try to buy A rated (or even A+) to help save on running costs.

✓ **GAS** Great for fast hob heat-up and superior baking in the oven, but you will have less control over the oven temperature.

✓ **ELECTRIC** Great temperature control with hi-tech fan cooking and the bonus of internal lights, as well as different heating options, including top and bottom heat.

✓ **DUAL FUEL** Offers the best of an electric fan oven and fast gas heat-up on the hob, plus electronic ignition for added reliability.

✓ **OVEN CAPACITY** Double ovens tend to have a large main cavity of about 55-60 ltr and a smaller oven that's about 30-35 ltr. The smaller one often doubles as a grill.

✓ **COOKER DOORS** Drop-down doors can make accessing large dishes difficult, so look out for side-opening doors on main ovens.

✓ **HOBS** Choose from gas, electric, ceramic and induction. Induction and gas offer the fastest heat-up and most powerful burners. Ceramic and induction are the easiest to clean.

✓ **GRILL** Look for a grill element that reaches across the cavity to give off as much heat as possible.

✓ **TIMER** Digital timers are very useful and some will turn off the oven at a set time.

✓ **CLEANING** Enamel-coated oven walls can be wiped clean, while catalytic liners help absorb and break down food spills, which are burned away during cooking. Pyrolytic cleaning burns away any dirt, leaving an ash-like residue to wipe away.

TIP *The more shelves the oven has the more dishes you can fit in – no matter what the capacity is.*

Range style

£799 CURRYS

LEISURE AL90F230K IN BLUE
Type Dual-fuel 90cm **Capacity** 58 ltr/66 ltr **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H90cm x W90cm x D60cm **Features** Separate grill, five-burner hob, catalytic liners, programmable main oven

BUY IT... to benefit from two large fan ovens and the convenience of a separate grill. Also available in Black.

£660 APPLIANCES DIRECT

CANDY CCG9M52PX
Type 90cm single multi-function oven and hob **Capacity** 108 ltr **Energy rating** A **Dimensions** H90cm x W90cm x D60cm **Features** Cast-iron pan supports, 3.8kW wok burner, storage area, LED programmer

BUY IT... and make entertaining a breeze thanks to its extra-large capacity.

3 OVEN MITTS *to buy*

Protect your hands with this stylish essential

1 GRAPHIC COOL Arca Printed oven glove, £7, Habitat

2 RETRO VIBE Meadow Bloom double mitt, £16.50, Lilly Loray

3 WORD UP Fish & Chips oven glove, £16.75, Hunkydory Home

TIP *Place a liner at the bottom of your oven (check out Lakeland) to catch spills and drips and make cleaning easier.*

£1,250 BAUMATIC

BCD925BL
Type 90cm dual-fuel twin-cavity range cooker **Capacity** 50 ltr/35 ltr **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H94-98cm x W90cm x D60cm **Features** Six oven functions, two grills, five-burner gas hob, enamel cavity, available in Black or Stainless Steel

BUY IT... for professional looks and features. The 3.8kW gas burner is perfect for searing steaks and stir-frying.

£1,159 BELLING

CLASSIC 90E IN HOT JALAPENO
Type Double electric multi-function fan oven with separate grill **Capacity** 91 ltr/62 ltr/35 ltr **Energy rating** AA **Dimensions** H85cm x W90cm x D60cm **Features** Five-zone ceramic hob, enamel liners, defrost cooking, LED programmable timer

BUY IT... and make a bold statement! With almost 200 ltr of space, this design is the ideal choice for entertaining large crowds.

£529 FLAVEL

FL95CRX ELECTRIC COOKER
Type Single-cavity electric cooker with hob **Capacity** 104 ltr **Energy rating** B **Dimensions** H85cm x W90cm x D60cm **Features** Five-zone ceramic hob, oven tray storage drawer, full-width grill, LED timer

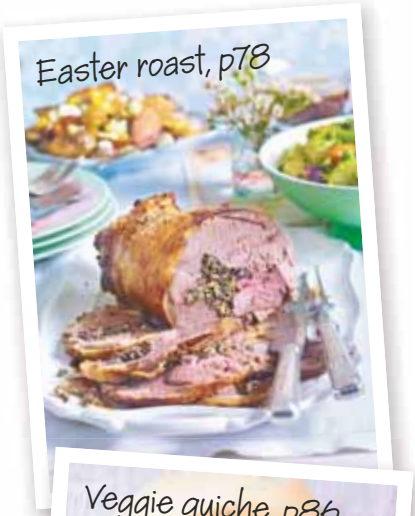
BUY IT... and enjoy the style and capacity of a range for the price of a standard oven. Plus, set the programmable timer so you can return home to a hot meal.

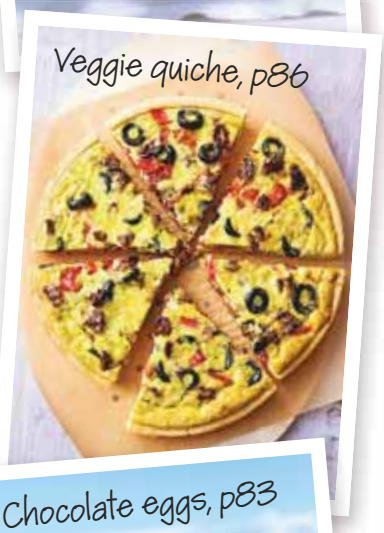
WORDS CHRIS HASLAM

Cookit

QUICK & EASY IDEAS FOR EVERY DAY

30+ RECIPES to try this month





Elderflower drizzle celebration cake

TAKES 45 MIN SERVES 12

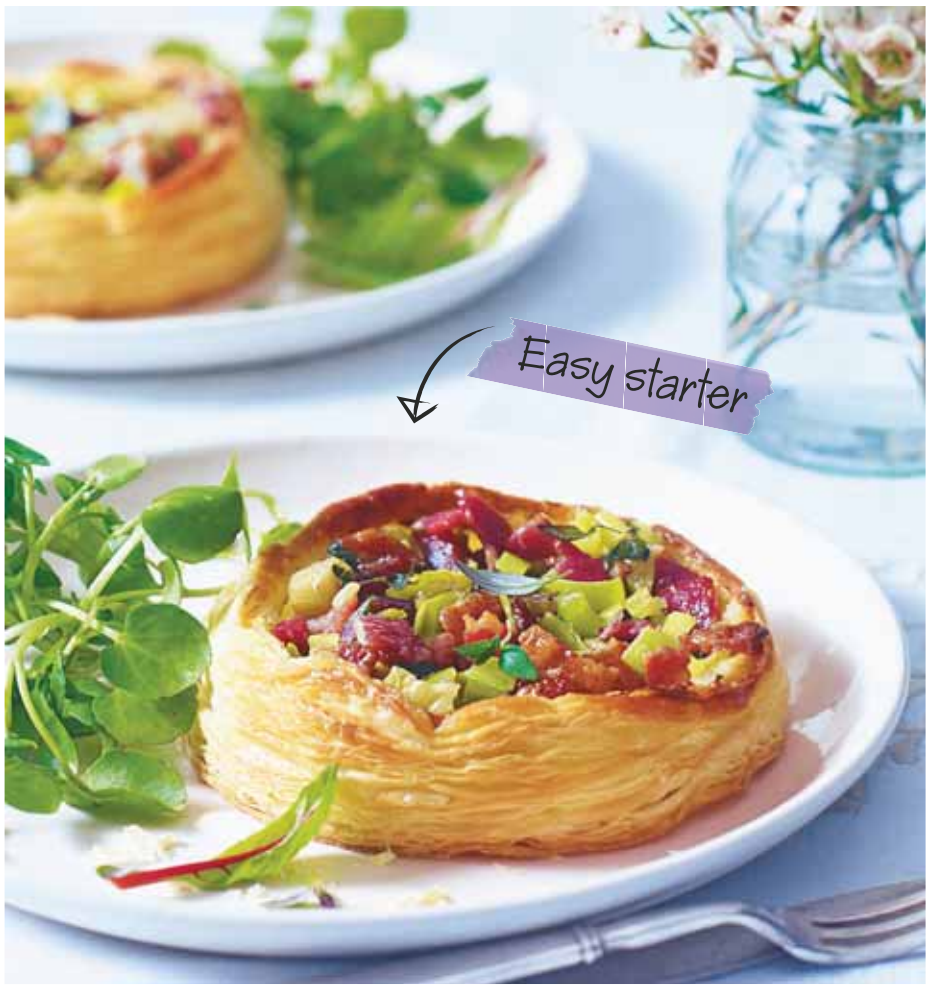
Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas 4. Line and grease 3 x 20cm cake tins. Cream **225g softened butter** with **225g caster sugar** until soft and light. Gradually add **4 beaten eggs** and **2tbsp milk.** Fold in **225g self-raising flour.** Divide the mixture between the tins and bake for 20 min until springy to touch. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 min and turn out on to a wire rack to cool. To make the filling, whip **300ml double cream** with **3tbsp elderflower cordial** and **2tbsp icing sugar.** Put the bottom cake on to a cake stand, spread over **2tbsp gooseberry jam** and top with half the cream. Repeat with the next layer. Place the final sponge on top. Mix together **225g icing sugar** with **6tbsp elderflower cordial** and drizzle over the cake, letting it spill over the sides. Decorate with sugared flowers.

IN SEASON *April*

✶ Asparagus ✶ Lamb ✶ Broccoli ✶ Rocket ✶ Crab ✶ Cod ✶ Watercress ✶ Venison ✶ Sardines ✶ Spring onions

Lay on *a roast*

Gather friends and family round and try out our easy Easter lunch – don't forget to finish off with an Easter egg hunt!



Leek & bacon tartlets

TAKES 40 MIN SERVES 6

100g streaky bacon, diced ✳ 20g butter ✳ 2 leeks, thinly sliced ✳ 100ml white wine ✳ 6tbsp crème fraiche ✳ 500g puff pastry ✳ 2 sprigs thyme

1 Preheat oven to 190°C/Gas 5. Fry the bacon for 10 min until crispy. Set aside. Heat the butter in the same pan and fry the sliced leeks for 5 min. Season with salt and pepper.

2 Pour in white wine and bubble for 5 min until the leeks are soft and most of the liquid has evaporated. Stir in 3tbsp crème fraiche and add the bacon.

3 Roll out the pastry until just thicker than a £1 coin. Cut out 6 x 12cm circles, using a saucer as a guide. Score a 1cm margin around the edge and put on a baking tray. Spread 3tbsp crème fraiche over the pastry, top with the bacon and leek mixture and thyme leaves.

4 Bake for 15-20 min until the pastry is puffed up and golden, sprinkle with a few extra thyme leaves before serving.

TIP *Serve each tartlet with a watercress garnish drizzled with balsamic vinegar.*

Leg of lamb

TAKES 2 HR 20 MIN SERVES 6

100g pine nuts, lightly toasted ✳ Bunch mint ✳ Zest and juice 1 lemon ✳ 75g pitted black olives ✳ 2 garlic cloves, crushed ✳ 1tsp ground cinnamon ✳ 5tbsp olive oil ✳ 2kg butterflied, boneless leg of lamb ✳ 400ml white wine ✳ 400ml beef stock

1 Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas 7. Whizz the pine nuts, mint, lemon zest and juice, olives, garlic, cinnamon and 3tbsp oil in a food processor to make a coarse paste.

2 Lay the lamb skin-side down and season. Spread the paste over the meat, leaving a 3cm border. Roll up and tie with string at 5cm intervals. Rub over the remaining oil.

3 Put the lamb into a roasting tin and cook for 30 min. Turn the heat down to 180°C/Gas 4, pour in the wine and roast for 1 hr. Remove from the oven and leave to rest for 30 min while you make the gravy.

4 Pour the juices and any bits of stuffing into a pan; skim off the fat. Add the stock and warm through, adding any extra juices from the resting joint. Carve and serve.

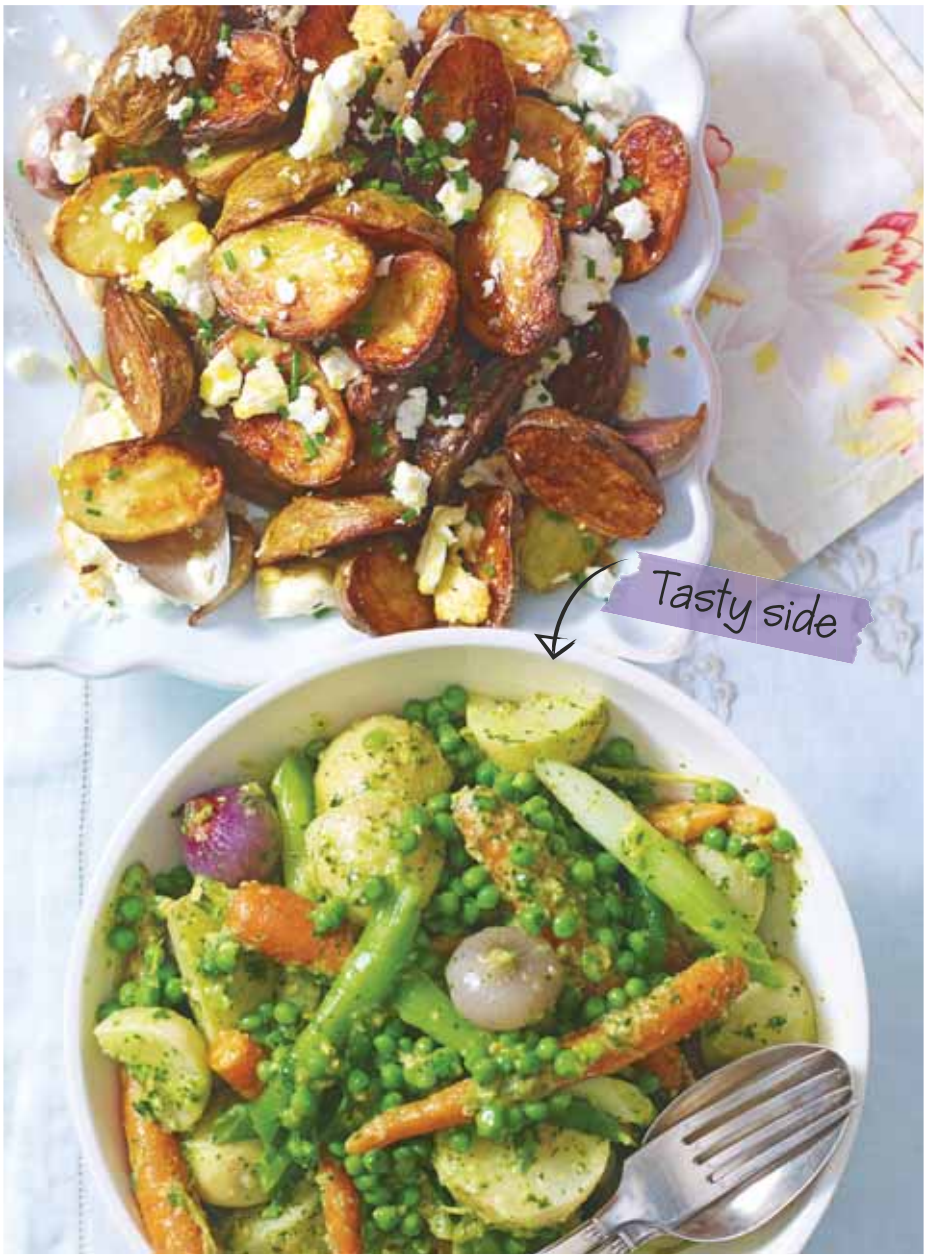
3 *Easter cakes* to BUY

1 THE CO-OPERATIVE Truly Irresistible Lemon Rose cake, £5

2 MARKS & SPENCER Collection Hand Decorated Golden Egg Salted Caramel cake, £14

3 WAITROSE Chick Bar Sponge cake, £15

Roast your lamb with fresh herbs, such as rosemary or mint, to bring out the flavour



Feta roasties

TAKES 1 HR 15 MIN SERVES 6

Preheat oven to 220°C/Gas 7. Bring a pan of water to the boil, add **1.5kg halved new potatoes** and cook for 10 min. Drain and allow to steam-dry briefly, then with the lid on, give the pan a good shake. Tip into a roasting tin, drizzle with **4tbsp olive oil** and season. Roast for 50 min, adding the cloves from **2 bulbs garlic** and stirring halfway through. Crumble over **200g feta,** cook for 5-10 min, then scatter with **small bunch chopped chives.**

Spring veg

TAKES 30 MIN SERVES 6

In a pan, melt **50g butter** with **500ml veg stock, 300g baby carrots, 300g baby turnips** and **200g shallots.** Simmer for 20 min until tender and the liquid is almost absorbed. To make the pesto: whizz **1 garlic clove, 30g toasted, flaked almonds, bunch flat-leaf parsley** and a **pinch salt** in a food processor. Drizzle in **75ml olive oil.** Stir in **40g grated Parmesan** and set aside. Add **250g defrosted petit pois** and **2 trimmed bunches spring onions** to the pan for 5 min. Stir through the pesto.

TIP *Save leftover vegetables and use to make bubble and squeak the next day.*

Hot cross bun bombes

TAKES 55 MIN + FREEZING SERVES 6

✳ 200g raisins ✳ 4tbsp brandy ✳ 100g marzipan ✳ 2 hot cross buns, whizzed to form crumbs ✳ 125g soft dark brown sugar ✳ 2 eggs, separated ✳ 250ml double cream ✳ 180ml single cream ✳ ½tsp vanilla essence ✳ ½tsp mixed spice ✳ 400g tin sliced peaches

1 Put the raisins and brandy in a pan and bring to the boil, turn off the heat and leave the fruit to plump up and cool. Whizz in a blender with 3tbsp warm water, to purée.

2 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas 6. Lightly oil six pudding moulds and line with clingfilm. Roll out the marzipan to the thickness of a £1 coin. Cut out 12 x 1cm-wide strips and place them in the moulds in a cross shape.

3 Mix the hot cross bun crumbs with the sugar, spread out in a roasting tin and put in the oven for 5 min to caramelise.

4 Using an electric whisk, beat the egg yolks, creams, caramelised crumbs, vanilla essence and mixed spice until thickened and lightly whipped. Whisk the egg whites until soft peaks form and fold into the cream mixture, then ripple the puréed fruit through.

5 Spoon into the moulds, fold the marzipan strips and excess clingfilm over to cover, freeze for 4 hr. Transfer to the fridge for 15 min before serving. Garnish with peaches and a pinch of mixed spice.

3 *Easter eggs* to BUY

1 BETTYS Milk Chocolate Happy Easter egg, £14.95 (180g)

2 TESCO Finest Belgian Milk Chocolate Decorated egg, £12 (1kg)

3 OCADO Elizabeth Shaw Zesty Crisp Collection egg, £9.99 (325g)

RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHS TIMEINCUKCONTENTCOM, ESSENTIALS

Caramelise the peaches by pan-frying in butter and a little sugar for 5 min

Spicy noodle fritters

TAKES 15 MIN SERVES 6

1tbsp medium curry powder ✳ 3tbsp cornflour mixed with 1tbsp cold water ✳ 3 eggs, beaten ✳ 1 red chilli, finely sliced ✳ 300g ready-to-wok fine rice noodles, roughly chopped ✳ Bunch spring onions, finely sliced ✳ 2tbsp sunflower oil FOR THE DIP 4tbsp redcurrant jelly ✳ ½tsp five-spice powder ✳ 1tbsp water ✳ 1 garlic clove ✳ 1tbsp soy sauce

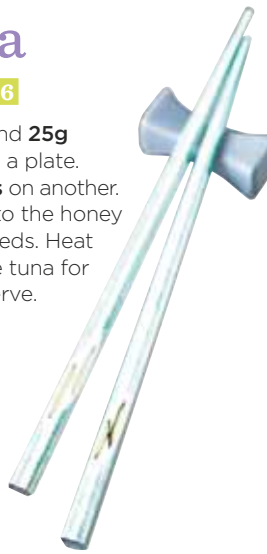
1 Mix together the curry powder, cornflour and eggs. Add the chilli, noodles and onion and toss well to mix everything together.

2 Heat a splash of oil in a large frying pan and cook the noodle mix in spoonfuls on a medium heat for 2 min each side. Cook in batches and keep warm while you cook the rest. Heat all the dip ingredients gently in a pan for 5 min and serve in a small bowl.

Sesame tuna

TAKES 15 MIN SERVES 6

Mix together **2tbsp honey** and **25g finely grated root ginger** on a plate. Sprinkle **4tbsp sesame seeds** on another. Dip **2 x 250g tuna steaks** into the honey and then into the sesame seeds. Heat **1tbsp oil** in a pan and fry the tuna for 2 min each side. Slice and serve.



A taste of Thailand

Spice up meal times with our speedy Asian-inspired recipes

Steak wraps

TAKES 15 MIN SERVES 6

Toss **500g thinly sliced rump steak, 1 thinly sliced red onion** and **1 sliced red pepper** with **1tbsp oil** in a large bowl. Heat **1tbsp oil** in a wok over a high heat and add the steak. Leave for 30 secs without stirring, then stir fry for 2 min. Add **100ml hoisin sauce** and **3tbsp sherry,** boil then simmer for 5 min. Serve in **Chinese leaves** topped with **chopped peanuts** and **sliced red chilli.**

Wasabi veg curry

TAKES 20 MIN SERVES 6

Whizz **2tbsp miso paste, 1tsp wasabi paste, 1tsp sugar, small bunch coriander leaves** and **small bunch Thai basil leaves** with **200ml vegetable stock** until smooth. Stir fry **2 x 160g packs marinated tofu, 250g sugar snap peas, bunch sliced spring onions, 200g soya beans** and **200g baby corn** in **oil** for 4 min. Pour in the sauce and simmer for 2 min.

Salt & pepper butterfly prawns

TAKES 15 MIN SERVES 6

Mix **300g raw king prawns** with **1tsp crushed Szechuan** and **1tsp crushed black peppercorns** and chill in the fridge for 2 hr. Remove 30 min before cooking. Fry the prawns for 2 min in **1tbsp sunflower oil** until bright pink. Toss in the **juice ½ lime** and **1tsp crushed, flaked sea salt.** Serve.

RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHS TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM, ESSENTIALS

Make a showstopper

Get creative in the kitchen with our fun Easter creations – perfect for giving as presents

Simnel cake

TAKES 1 HR MAKES 16

✳ 175g butter ✳ 350g caster sugar ✳ 3 eggs ✳ 300g self-raising flour ✳ ¼tsp bicarbonate of soda ✳ 400ml buttermilk ✳ 25g cocoa ✳ 50g ground almonds ✳ 100g raspberries, squashed ✳ 10ml pink food colouring FOR THE FILLING 3tbsp chocolate spread ✳ 3tbsp raspberry jam FOR THE FROSTING 3 egg whites ✳ 250g caster sugar ✳ 200g butter, cubed ✳ 200g white chocolate, cubed ✳ Pink edible glitter ✳ 11 white chocolate truffles

1 Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas 4. Grease and line 3 x 20cm round cake tins. Cream together the butter and sugar. Beat in the eggs. Fold in flour, bicarb and buttermilk.
2 Divide into three bowls, add the cocoa to one and the almonds to the other two. Add the raspberries and pink colouring to one with the almonds. Spoon the mixtures into the tins and bake for 25 min.
3 Turn out onto wire racks to cool. Put the chocolate cake onto a cake stand and coat the top with chocolate spread. Top with the raspberry cake and spread with jam, then finish with the almond cake.
4 Put egg whites and sugar in a bowl from a food mixer and rest over a pan of simmering water to dissolve the sugar. Remove from heat and whisk until thick. Whisk in the butter a cube at a time. Melt white chocolate in a bowl over simmering water. Pour in the chocolate. Spread over the cake. Finish with truffles and glitter.

Chocolate buttons

TAKES 20 MIN MAKES 40

✳ 200g white chocolate ✳ 200g milk chocolate ✳ 4tsp freeze-dried raspberries

1 Break the chocolate into squares and put in two separate bowls, melt over two pans of simmering water (don't let the water touch the bowls).
2 Line four trays with baking parchment then put teaspoonfuls of the melted chocolate on to the trays, spaced apart and spreading each one to an even 2cm round.
3 Sprinkle over a few raspberry pieces on each one, then top with a little edible glitter. Leave in a cool, dark place to firm up.

Rocky road

TAKES 20 MIN MAKES 16

✳ 390g milk chocolate ✳ 75g butter ✳ 5tbsp golden syrup ✳ 200g shortbread ✳ 50g chocolate mini eggs ✳ 125g fudge ✳ 100g mini marshmallows FOR THE TOPPING 150g milk chocolate ✳ 15g butter ✳ 50g fudge, chopped ✳ 50g chocolate mini eggs

1 Grease and line an 18cm x 28cm tin with baking parchment. Put the chocolate, butter and golden syrup into a bowl and heat over a pan of simmering water to melt (don't let the water touch the bowl or the chocolate will seize).
2 Put the shortbread into a large plastic bag, tie a knot to secure and bash with a rolling pin to crush. Put 50g mini eggs into another plastic bag and bash to crush. Cut the fudge into small pieces.
3 Take the chocolate off the heat, stir in the biscuits, crushed eggs, fudge and marshmallows. Stir until the mixture is well combined. Tip into the prepared tin and chill.
4 To make the topping, melt the milk chocolate with the butter. Pour over the chilled mixture to cover. Scatter over fudge pieces and mini eggs. Chill until set.

Mini Easter eggs

TAKES 1 HR MAKES 6

✳ 6 eggs ✳ 200g milk chocolate ✳ 200g white chocolate ✳ 200g plain chocolate ✳ 3tsp sunflower oil

1 Use a skewer to tap a small hole into the base of an egg. Peel away a little shell and tip the egg out into a bowl. Repeat with the other eggs. Rinse the shells and put them hole-side down in a warm place, to dry out.
2 Break the chocolate into different heat-proof bowls, each with 1tsp oil. Fill three saucepans with a little water and place a bowl of chocolate on each (don't let the water touch the bowls). Bring to a simmer and slowly melt the chocolate.
3 Turn the eggs shells the right way up and spoon the chocolate into the hole. Chill in the fridge until solid. Peel the shell to reveal the chocolate eggs. Put into an egg box to serve or give as a gift.

RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHS TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM, ESSENTIALS

Simple suppers

Take the stress out of dinner with our easy recipes, cooked in 40 minutes or less, leaving time for a favourite pud

SHOPPING LIST

MEAT & FISH
* 4 pork steaks
* 4 cod steaks
* 500g chicken fillets

FRUIT & VEGETABLES
* 1 garlic bulb
* Big bunch basil
* Small bunches of thyme, mint & coriander
* 2 leeks
* 150g green beans
* 150g asparagus tips
* 2 beef tomatoes
* 4 courgettes
* 250g cherry tomatoes
* Zest & juice 1 lemon & orange
* 3 red onions

DAIRY
* 4 eggs
* 50g Parmesan
* 250g halloumi
* Butter

GROCERY & FROZEN
* 80g fresh white breadcrumbs
* 200g spaghetti
* Olive oil
* 2 x 200g tin chopped tomatoes
* Chilli flakes
* Worcestershire sauce
* Caster sugar
* 350g pasta bows
* 150g frozen peas
* Vegetable stock cubes
* 1tbsp pine nuts
* 30g pumpkin seeds
* 200g couscous
* Harissa paste
* Groundnut oil
* Tikka masala paste
* Mini naan breads
* Cocoa powder
* 25g pecans
* 125g prunes
* Self-raising flour
* Dark chocolate

Monday
Pork escalope & tomato spaghetti

TAKES 40 MIN SERVES 4

2 garlic cloves ✶ 2 eggs, lightly beaten ✶ 80g breadcrumbs ✶ 20g Parmesan ✶ 4 pork steaks ✶ 200g tin chopped tomatoes ✶ Pinch chilli flakes ✶ 1tsp Worcestershire sauce ✶ 2tsp sugar ✶ 200g spaghetti ✶ 2tbsp olive oil ✶ Basil leaves, to serve

1 Crush the garlic and stir into the egg. Next, mix the breadcrumbs with grated Parmesan and set aside.

2 Using a rolling pin, bash the pork until 1cm thick, then dip each steak into the egg mix, followed by the breadcrumbs, coating well each time.

3 In a small saucepan, bring the chopped tomatoes, Worcestershire sauce, chilli flakes and sugar to the boil. Leave to simmer gently for 10 min.

4 Meanwhile, boil the pasta according to pack instructions in a large saucepan with a pinch of salt (approximately 8-10 min), then drain and toss through the tomato sauce.

5 Pour the oil into a large frying pan and place over a medium heat. Add the pork steaks and fry each side until golden and cooked through. Serve the pork with the spaghetti and scatter over basil leaves to serve.

6 Alternatively, grate a little lemon zest into the breadcrumb mixture and use chicken fillets flattened with a rolling pin instead of pork.

Tuesday
Primavera pasta

TAKES 20 MIN SERVES 4

350g pasta bows ✶ 2 leeks, sliced ✶ 150g frozen peas ✶ 150g green beans, halved ✶ 150g asparagus tips ✶ 1 vegetable stock cube ✶ 1tbsp fresh thyme, chopped

1 Cook the pasta in boiling water for 10-12 min or as directed on the packet. After 5 min, add the leeks, peas and beans to the pan, then add the asparagus 2 min later. Cook until the pasta and vegetables are just tender.

2 Drain the pasta and veg, reserving 450ml water to mix with the stock cube. Return the pasta and vegetables to the pan with the stock and herbs, and season. Mix together well until the stock cube has dissolved and divide between bowls to serve.

TIP *Save leftover pasta for lunch the next day and mix with some flaked cooked salmon.*

Wednesday
Pesto cod & vegetable parcels

TAKES 30 MIN SERVES 4

FOR THE PESTO 1tbsp pine nuts ✳ Pinch salt ✳ 125g basil leaves ✳ 30g Parmesan ✳ 1 garlic clove ✳ 125ml extra virgin olive oil FOR THE COD 2 medium beef tomatoes ✳ 1 garlic clove, crushed ✳ Small bunch basil ✳ 2 courgettes, sliced ✳ 4 cod fillets

1 Make the pesto by toasting the pine nuts in a frying pan for a few min. Blitz in a food processor with the salt, basil leaves, Parmesan, garlic and oil.
2 Preheat oven to 200°C/Gas 6. Cut 4 large squares of greaseproof paper, put into a roasting tin. Add a few slices of tomato to the centre of each, season and top with garlic, basil and courgettes.
3 Place the cod steaks on top and spread over 8tsp of the pesto. Seal and bake for 20 min until the fish and vegetables are tender. The remaining pesto will keep in the fridge for up to a week.

Thursday
Halloumi with couscous

TAKES 20 MIN SERVES 4

✳ 2 large courgettes, quartered and cut into chunks ✳ 2 red onions, sliced ✳ 1tbsp olive oil ✳ 250g cherry tomatoes ✳ 200g couscous ✳ 275ml vegetable stock ✳ Zest and juice 1 lemon and 1 orange ✳ 250g halloumi, cut into 12 slices ✳ 2tsp harissa paste ✳ Small bunch mint, chopped ✳ 30g pumpkin seeds, toasted

1 Preheat oven to 230°C/Gas 8. Put the courgettes and onions in a baking dish and drizzle with 2tsp oil. Roast for 12 min. Add the tomatoes and cook for 5 min more.
2 In a bowl, cover the couscous with boiling stock, lay a tea towel over the top; leave for 5 min. Fluff the grains, stir in the citrus zest and juice and season.
3 Pat the halloumi dry. Brush a frying pan with oil and cook the halloumi on a high heat for 2 min each side until golden. Add the harissa paste, and cook, turning, until the water has evaporated.

Quick curry

Friday
Chicken tikka masala

TAKES 30 MIN SERVES 4

✳ 1tbsp groundnut oil ✳ 1 red onion, sliced ✳ 500g chicken fillets, diced ✳ 6tbsp tikka masala paste ✳ 200g can chopped tomatoes ✳ Small bunch coriander ✳ Mini naan breads, to serve

1 Heat oil in a large wok and gently fry the onion for 5 min to soften. Add the chicken and cook for 10 min until browned.
2 Stir in the tikka masala paste (check jar instructions as different brands can vary in strength). Heat for a few min to cook the curry paste.
3 Add 100ml water and the tomatoes. Warm through for 5 min. Sprinkle a few drops of water onto the naan bread and pop under a grill for a few min to warm through. Spoon the curry into bowls, top with coriander and serve with naan bread.

For afters
Double hot chocolate puds

TAKES 50 MIN SERVES 6

✳ Cocoa powder, for dusting ✳ 50g pecans ✳ 125g prunes, chopped and microwaved for 2 min with 75ml hot water ✳ 100g butter ✳ 140g caster sugar ✳ 2 eggs ✳ 175g self-raising flour ✳ 75g 85% dark chocolate FOR THE TOPPING 40g caster sugar ✳ Knob of butter ✳ 75g dark chocolate, chopped ✳ 25g pecans, slivered ✳ Ice cream to serve

1 Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas 4. Butter 6 x 175ml pudding moulds and dust with cocoa powder. Cut 6 x 25cm squares of foil and cover with butter.
2 Whizz the pecans in a food processor until fine and set aside. Microwave the prunes with 75ml water for 2 min and add to the food processor with the butter, sugar and eggs and whizz for 1 min. Add the flour, chocolate and pecans and mix again. Divide between the moulds, cover with the foil, butter-side down and bake in a tin filled with 1cm hot water, for 35 min.
3 For the topping, put the sugar, butter and 75ml boiling water in a pan and boil for 1 min. Take off the heat and stir in the chocolate until melted. Turn out the puds, top with the sauce and pecans and serve with ice cream.

RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHS TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM, ESSENTIALS, WOMAN'S WEEKLY, WOMAN & HOME

Let's do lunch

One recipe, three ways – ring the changes with these variations

Open avocado sandwich

TAKES 15 MIN SERVES 2

100ml balsamic vinegar • Pinch sugar • Sourdough bread • 2tbsp olive oil • 1 avocado • 4 slices prosciutto ham

1 First, make a balsamic glaze by gently heating 100ml balsamic vinegar and a large pinch sugar in a saucepan until reduced and syrupy. It should coat the back of a spoon.

2 Heat a griddle pan on high. Cut 2 thick slices of sourdough bread and brush with 1tbsp of olive oil. Then griddle on both sides until charred and crisp.

3 Slice the avocado in half, remove the stone and cut the flesh into slices. Top the toasts with the avocado and prosciutto ham then drizzle over a little balsamic glaze and the remaining oil. The remaining balsamic glaze can be kept in the fridge.

Or try...

OPEN AVOCADO, LETTUCE & TOMATO SANDWICH Follow recipe as before only use 2 slices of wholemeal bread instead of sourdough. Top toast with a little mayonnaise, lettuce, 1 sliced tomato and avocado slices. Season but omit the glaze.

Or **OPEN AVOCADO, BACON & TOMATO SANDWICH** Follow the recipe as before only top toasts with 8 grilled rashers of bacon, sliced tomatoes, basil leaves and avocado.

Mediterranean quiche

TAKES 30 MIN SERVES 2

185g ready-to-roll shortcrust pastry • ½ x 460g jar roasted red peppers, drained and sliced • 4-6 sun-dried tomatoes, chopped • 2tbsp sliced black olives • 2 eggs • 170ml double cream • 2tbsp green pesto

1 Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas 4. Roll out the pastry to line a flan dish. Prick with a fork, line with baking paper and fill with baking beans. Bake for 10 min or until lightly golden. Remove paper and beans.

2 Place the roasted peppers and sun-dried tomatoes over the base and scatter the sliced olives on top.

3 Beat together the eggs, cream, pesto and seasoning and pour into the pastry case. Bake for 30-40 min until golden and set in the centre.

Or try...

RED PEPPER & LEEK QUICHE Follow recipe as before only fry 1 sliced leek in a knob of butter for 5 min until softened. Add with peppers but omit the olives.

Or **CARAMELISED ONION QUICHE** Follow recipe as before only add 2tbsp caramelised red onion in place of the green pesto. Add one finely sliced red onion lightly sautéed in butter with the roasted peppers.

Pasta with vegetables

TAKES 20 MIN SERVES 2

1 large aubergine, cut into chunks • 1 red pepper • 2tbsp olive oil • 2 garlic cloves • 1tbsp balsamic vinegar • 1tsp caster sugar • 250g pasta • Handful basil leaves, plus extra to serve • Freshly grated Parmesan

1 Preheat oven to 220°C/Gas 7. Toss the aubergine chunks, red pepper slices with the oil and whole garlic cloves in a roasting tin with salt and pepper.

2 Roast for 10 min, add the vinegar and sugar, and cook for 5 min. Cook the pasta to packet instructions and drain.

3 When vegetables are tender remove from oven. Tip in the cooked pasta; stir everything together in the roasting tin, divide between bowls. Serve with grated parmesan, basil and season.

Or try...

SPAGHETTI WITH VEGETABLES Follow recipe as before only add 300g cherry tomatoes in place of the red peppers. Substitute penne pasta for spaghetti.

Or **PASTA WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH & SAGE** Follow recipe as before only add 1 cubed butternut squash and 1 chopped parsnip instead of the aubergine and red pepper. Roast for 20 min more and use chopped sage instead of basil.

COOK IT EDITOR AMY HODGE LUNCH RECIPES EMMA WITHERS PHOTOGRAPHS TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM, ESSENTIALS

BAKING DAY
Oak chopping board, £18; Shake ceramic flour sifter, £5; ceramic egg holder, £10; oak rolling pin, £12; bowl in Blue, £10; porcelain milk bottle, £5; all Tesco

April BUY IT

Go for a vintage kitchen feel with pristine tiles and rustic open shelves to display cool white and blue ceramics, plus wooden accessories.

Stylists at Home

CARON SAYS:

"I love the crisp look of this blue and white china. I like to display my vintage glassware collection on the open shelves in my kitchen."

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Kensington shutters from Tuiss have a central bar so they can be opened and closed easily

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Give your windows a smart makeover with plantation-style shutters. They're a favourite with *Style at Home* as they look great in any room, whether traditional or modern. And the stylish new ranges by Tuiss are not only energy saving but value for money, too, at just £99 per sq m. We've teamed up with Tuiss to offer readers a 20% discount.

Made to measure in a choice of two designs – modern San Francisco and classic Kensington – the shutters are easy to install. The 'screw and slot' system allows you to slot the shutters into place onto a pre-sized frame for your window.

Made to last

Tuiss shutters are stronger and lighter than wooden alternatives as they're made from a unique washable polymer material with an aluminium core. And, if you fancy a change, they can be repainted without any preparation for a quick and easy makeover. They're also UV resistant, have three times the insulation of wooden shutters and are waterproof – so they're ideal for kitchens and bathrooms. Plus, with no operating cords, they're child safe. Once you've made your choice, Tuiss shutters can be delivered within the UK in just seven to 10 days.

FOR MORE DETAILS Visit tuiss.co.uk or call 0800 862 0466.

TERMS & CONDITIONS This offer is for 20% off items at Tuiss and is valid only for orders and purchases made between 2 March 2015 and 7 April 2015 inclusive. Discount does not apply to delivery or samples. This discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or promotion. Claim your discount by visiting tuiss.co.uk/readeroffer and enter the code **SHExtra20** in the discount code box. For full terms and conditions, please visit tuiss.co.uk or call 0800 862 0466 for more information.

tuiss your home, our world Style at Home

SIMPLY CHIC
Shutter designs, from left: Kensington and San Francisco

TEAR OUT AND KEEP

Bring it BACK TO LIFE

We're on a mission to recondition. Take your junk-shop finds or jaded favourites and make new from old with our easy guide

TURN OVER
to find out how to create this colourful shelf...

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

TAKES JUST 2 HRS!

Stylish shelving

Use pretty paper to revamp plain shelves

YOU WILL NEED

- Small wooden shelf, £1.99, charity shop
- Chalk paint tester pot in Napoleonic Blue, £5.95, Annie Sloan
- Soft clear wax, £8.95 for 500ml, Annie Sloan
- Hardboard, £5.79 per sheet, local DIY shop
- Pepin Floral Premium Paper Booklet, £10 for a book of 12, Hobbycraft
- PVA glue, £2.50 for 500ml, Hobbycraft
- Fine pin nails & sandpaper
- Metal ruler & craft knife

1 Lightly sand the surface of the shelf and wipe clean. Paint with two coats of the chalk paint. Once completely dry, use sandpaper to lightly distress the paintwork. Wipe clean then coat with clear wax and buff with a cloth once dry.

2 Place the shelf on the hardboard, matching the top and side edges, then draw around the remaining sides. Use a metal ruler and craft knife to score lines on the hardboard then gently fold it to snap along the lines. Mark the position of the middle shelf with pencil.

3 Brush PVA glue on the lower half of the board and smooth the paper in place. Trim the excess, leaving a 1-2cm overhang. Repeat with top half using the second sheet. Turn over and stick down the overhanging paper.

4 Use nails to secure the backboard to the unit by hammering into the wooden frame and shelf. Hang using small hangers screwed through the board into the wood.

Cost £32.68

TAKES JUST 30 MINS!

A scrap from an old T-shirt or jumper would work well for this project

Pin cushion

Keep pins safe and tidy with this cute yet easy idea

YOU WILL NEED

- Polystyrene egg, 42p, eBay
- 15cm x 15cm fabric remnant
- Russian doll, £1.79, eBay
- Glue & pins
- Scissors

1 Put the bottom end (the wider part) of the egg in the centre of the fabric and gather at the top, pulling tightly around the egg. Secure in place with a few pins; trim off any excess.

2 Push the egg firmly into the doll base, with the bottom facing up. If it feels a little loose in the doll, secure with glue around the top rim to hold in place. Leave to dry then add pins.

Cost £2.21

TEAR OUT AND KEEP

TAKES JUST 2 HRS!

Stylists at Home

SARAH SAYS:

"Revamping small items is a great way to gain confidence when upcycling. I'd like to try the lamp and add pompom trim for extra wow."

Folk-style lamp

Brighten up a neutral room with this colourful addition

YOU WILL NEED

- Printed chateau table lamp, £24.99, Dunelm
- Lampshade kit, £11.66 for 30cm design, Needcraft
- 30cm La Paloma Multi fabric, £12 per m, Frumble
- Chalk paint tester pots in Antibes Green, Antoinette and Emperor's Silk, £5.95 each, Annie Sloan
- Soft clear wax, £8.95 for 500ml, Annie Sloan

1 Use chalk paint to paint the base of the lamp in coloured sections, avoiding the top part where the bulb slots in. Once dry, touch up to give neat lines between colours. Leave to dry.

2 Use a cloth to cover the painted base with protective clear wax and leave to dry. Buff to a low sheen to finish the base. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to cover the lampshade with the fabric and fit to the base.

Cost £67.45

Vintage tray

Serve breakfast on this transformed picture frame

YOU WILL NEED

- Virserum frame, £10, Ikea
- Bradawl & pen
- Screwdriver & screws
- Framstalla gift wrap, £5 for four rolls, Ikea
- Handles, £1.75 each, eBay
- Vintage doily, £2.99, eBay

TAKES JUST 30 MINS!

Frame a montage of your favourite pictures for a more personal touch

1 Separate the frame, putting the glass and backboard to one side. Place one handle on the flat part of the frame, mark the position of the screws then make holes using a bradawl. Secure the handle in place and add a dot of white paint (or correction fluid) on the screw head to make it blend in. Repeat with the second handle.

2 Cut the wrapping paper to the size of the backboard. Lay the board down with the wrapping paper on top, then place the doily in the centre. Reassemble the frame.

Cost £21.49

Get clicking Go to housetohome.co.uk/styleathome for crafty ideas and how to videos

Découpage stool

Add a playful touch to your look using colour and pattern

YOU WILL NEED

- Frosta stool, £8, Ikea
- DecoArt paint in Dark Turquoise and Christmas Red, £1.50 each, Hobbycraft
- Russian doll gift wrap, £1.99, eBay
- PVA glue, £2.50 for 500ml, Hobbycraft
- Fine sandpaper
- Paintbrush, pencil & scissors

1 Lightly sand the stool and wipe clean. Place upside down on the wrapping paper and draw around the seat. Carefully cut out the paper circle.

2 Paint the seat rim, outer edge and sides of each leg with the turquoise paint. Use red paint for the inside of the legs. Apply two coats of each colour, leaving to dry between each one. Brush a layer of PVA glue onto the seat and smooth the paper circle in place. Finish with a protective layer of PVA.

Cost £15.49

You could also use an old pillowcase or blanket to make the cover

TAKES JUST 1.5 HRS!

Follow us on Facebook and share your upcycling pics with us – facebook.com/styleathomemag

Suitcase cat bed

Make a cosy spot for your feline friend to rest

YOU WILL NEED

- Vintage-style suitcase, £4.99, charity shop
- Chalk paint tester pot in Greek Blue, £5.95, Annie Sloan
- Soft clear wax, £8.95 for 500ml, Annie Sloan
- Linen tray cloth, £1.49, eBay
- Inner cushion pad, £1.50, Ikea

1 Remove the suitcase lid by either taking off the hinges or cutting through the fold of the join with a craft knife or scalpel. Paint the suitcase inside and out and leave to dry before applying a second coat. Once completely dry, apply clear wax with a soft cloth.

2 Fold the tray cloth in half (right sides facing out) and stitch round the open edges, leaving a 10cm gap. Open the cushion pad and use the filling to stuff the cushion, then stitch the opening shut. Pop the cushion (and cat!) inside the suitcase to finish.

Cost £22.88

PROJECTS & STYLING BECKY CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHS LIZZIE ORME

April DO IT

Go for pale-oak or white furniture and bed linen with pastel motifs for a spring revamp. Finish with dashes of uplifting yellow.

Continue the theme by hanging up feathered pompoms and pop some fresh flowers in a vase

Stylists at Home

SARAH SAYS:

"I love this look! It has a gorgeous spring-time feel. Waking up in this bedroom would certainly get your day off to an inspiring start."

PHOTOGRAPH TIMEINCUKCONTENT.COM

WIN *chic furniture for a brand-new look*

Enter for a chance to win £1,000 to spend at Multiyork

British furniture retailer Multiyork and *Style at Home* have teamed up to offer one lucky reader the chance to win £1,000-worth of vouchers to spend in store. So, whether you're after a brand-new look for spring or want to refresh your scheme with a gorgeous statement buy, you'll find something to suit all tastes at Multiyork.

Personal touch

Specialising in bespoke, hand-finished armchairs and sofas, Multiyork has 50 different shapes to choose from, plus hundreds of fabric options including designs by Monsoon, Osborne & Little and Nina Campbell, so you can be sure you'll find something perfect for you. What's more, most Multiyork designs come with a 15-year guarantee and many of the hand-sewn covers are removable, too.

As well as sofas and chairs you'll also find a fabulous range of storage solutions, dining furniture and living room essentials to complement your look. Finally, use lighting and accessories to add that all-important finishing touch to your space.

FOR MORE INFORMATION and to view the full range, visit multiyork.co.uk

FRESH LOOK
Alpine Sofa, from £829 (shown in Osborne & Little Japonerie fabric)

TIME TO EAT
Burghley dining table, £829; Ely Upholstered dining chair, from £115 each

PRIZE WORTH £1,000

MULTIYORK

TERMS & CONDITIONS One winner will receive £1,000 to spend at Multiyork. No cash alternative. Competition open to UK mainland entrants only. The promoter is *Style at Home*. Prize supplied by Multiyork and subject to availability. Employees cannot enter. *When you enter by text you may get SMS marketing messages from Time Inc. (UK) Ltd and *Style at Home*. If you don't want to, end text with NO INFO. Lines open at 00.01am on 3 March 2015 and close at midnight on 8 April 2015. See page 129 for full terms and conditions.

4 EASY WAYS *to enter*

- **PHONE** Call 0904 160 0655 and leave your answer, name, address and phone number. BT calls cost £1.53. Calls from other networks may be higher.
- **TEXT** SAHWIN2 followed by a space and your answer, then your name, house number and postcode to 87088*. Texts cost £1.50 per entry plus your network charges.
- **POST** Fill in the coupon (right) and send to Multiyork/SAH April competition, PO Box 502, Leicester LE94 0AB.
- **ONLINE** Visit housetohome.co.uk/competitions.

Phone lines open on 3 March 2015 and close at midnight on 8 April 2015. Postal entries must arrive by 11 April 2015. SP: Spoke Ltd 0333 202 3390.

ENTRY FORM

Style at Home

SEND TO Multiyork/SAH April competition, PO Box 502, Leicester LE94 0AB

QUESTION Which of theses is NOT a style of sofa?
a) Chesterfield b) Four-poster c) Chaise longue

ANSWER .....

Mrs/Ms/Miss/Mr/Title ..... First name ..... Surname .....

Address (BLOCK CAPITALS) .....

..... Postcode .....

Daytime phone number ..... Home phone number .....

Email address ..... Year of birth .....

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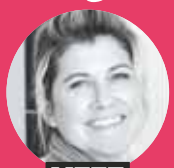
TOTAL
£3,081
Turn over for my shopping list

Bold look
'Sticking to a monochrome scheme was surprisingly easy once I had chosen the tiles – I seemed to see bits to buy everywhere'

STYLE TIP
'Check out local shops while on holiday for unusual bargains, like this quirky bath mat'

My room...



MEET PAULA

ABOUT ME I'm Paula Preston, 43, and I live with my husband Jamie, 48, in a three-bedroom, split-level apartment in Winchester, Hampshire, which we moved into in March last year.

MY CHALLENGE Revamping the family bathroom with the builders before moving in: ripping out the old fittings and coming up with a new scheme.

MY WISH LIST An Art Deco feel with a monochrome colour scheme, floor-to-ceiling tiling, good storage and mirrored wall cabinets to increase the light.

Before

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

'It's bold & beautiful'

Stylist at Home Paula, 43, from Hampshire, gave her bathroom an eye-catching new look

When our grown-up daughter Rosa moved out, my husband and I decided it was the perfect time for a change and that we would downsize from our four-bed house in Hampshire,' says Paula. 'We weren't sure what we wanted exactly, but we prefer older properties and a friend told us about a nearby house that was being converted into two apartments. We fell for this one straightaway, as we could see that we could get in at an early stage and have an input on the design. We sold our house quickly and then rented a flat on a short lease while our new home was being finished to our specifications.

Starting work

The house that our apartment is in had been empty for a while and was very old-fashioned. The building work began and the layout upstairs was sorted out, but the one room that stayed exactly the same, shape wise, was the main bathroom. The whole thing was peach and needed ripping out, and we decided to tackle this job first while we were still renting the flat and the building work was being completed.

Lack of storage was a huge issue, so we thought long and hard about how we could improve it. Because we were opting for a back-to-wall loo with a concealed cistern, we needed to put in a false wall at the end anyway, and we realised that if we made it go all the way to the ceiling, we could add two recessed cupboards. They would be perfect for storing toiletries and with mirrored doors, there would be no need for a separate mirror. This would also help bounce light around the room.

Choosing a scheme

I've always liked black and white decor, so we decided to go for a monochrome design and to keep things simple but stylish by using traditional fittings. I found some tiles I liked at Johnson Tiles but laid them vertically rather than horizontally so they would appear to lengthen the room and look more striking.

Finishing touches

The fun part was finding all the black and white accessories, including the striped towels, towel rail, laundry bins and all the smaller bits and pieces. It's amazing how many monochrome pieces are out there. As we only have a shower in our en suite, I love having a long hot soak in the bath – it makes me feel really pampered.' »

Adding style

'This cool wire soap dish stops the sink getting messy and looks stylish too. Plus it ties in with my other metal accessories, while the diffuser keeps the room smelling fresh'

On tap

'Classic fittings help to keep the look traditional; I decided to try something different and mounted this bath/shower mixer tap on the wall to make a real statement – I love it!'

Quirky accessories

'I've added little industrial-style buys to the bathroom like this fab light from Garden Trading – it creates real character'

Stay traditional

'I stuck to period-style fittings so the bathroom fitted in with the rest of the apartment'

Storage solutions

'An open-shelved vanity unit helps to keep the room feeling spacious and is the perfect spot for my striped laundry bin'

Flush fit

'Building a stud wall with recessed mirrored cabinets helps to keep the room feeling spacious. Plus, we've got plenty of extra storage'

My project step by step

Find out how Paula renovated her bathroom into a stylish and ultra-relaxing space

1 Making plans

We decide to downsize after our daughter moves out, so we rent a flat while our new home is being renovated. The bathroom is the first room we tackle because the layout in the rest of the property is still being altered. The apartment starts to feel more like home now I'm making decorating decisions.

2 Choosing a style

I want the bathroom to suit the style of the apartment and settle on a monochrome scheme. I love the crisp black-and-white look and the tiles are the key to my look. I don't want anything too glossy or small, so after looking at what's available I'm thrilled to find this Tones design from Johnson Tiles in various sizes. I go for large rectangular ones.

3 Handy cabinets

I have a moment of inspiration when it comes to storage. We need to build a stud wall to hide the cistern and we decide to recess slim cupboards into the fake wall so they won't take up space. I struggle to find cupboards I like, but luckily our carpenter Andy says he can make them, complete with mirrored doors.

4 Laying the tiles

We use the tiles vertically rather than horizontally to make the room look bigger, but realise it will be just too mad to have the tiles on the floor as well. I choose a marble-effect tile with deep grey running through it as a bit of a contrast on the floor. It looks even better than I had hoped.

5 Everyday use

I always wanted to have a bath in here as we only have a shower in the en suite. But I want to give people an option to shower, so we invest in a smart transparent bath screen so it doesn't detract from the spacious look.

6 Finishing touches

We go on holiday to Europe when the builders are doing some tricky bits in the house. I wander into France's version of Ikea and find a lovely dark-grey bath mat shaped like a flower. I really enjoy looking for all the accessories like the lovely striped towels, which help to complete the look. Now it's finished, the bathroom is the perfect place to chill out and enjoy a relaxing bath after a long day.

6

2

5

1

4

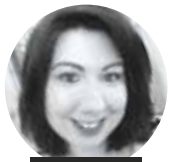
Warm up

'Make sure your heated towel rail is put in the right place on a wall so it is easy to reach and gives off enough heat for the rest of the room'

GREAT IDEA

'Experiment with tiles and lay vertically rather than horizontally for a striking look'

Stylists *at Home*



HAYLEY SAYS:

"I love the arrangement of the tiles in Paula's bathroom. It was a brave decision but it has paid off – they look really eye-catching."

Get *Paula's* bathroom LOOK

Work monochrome for a sophisticated vibe

BLACK & WHITE
Striped laundry basket, from £10, Rockett St George

LATHER UP
Baylis & Harding Sweet Mandarin & Grapefruit hand wash, £2.15, Boots

DEEP SHADES
Charcoal matt TNS7A wall tiles (400mm x 150mm), £23.66 per sq m, Johnson Tiles

TOTALLY WIRED
Wire basket, £20 for two, Sainsbury's

SUPER SOFT
Stripe towel, from £6 for a hand towel, Next

Here's my shopping list

Serene steel **bath,** £310; Drift **basin stand,** £625; Drift **sink,** £340; Victorian monobloc **tap,** £200; Victorian **bath/shower mixer,** £345; all Imperial. For similar **shower screen,** try Imperial shower screen, £300, Bathroom Village. Quantum back-to wall **loo** with concealed cistern and soft-close seat, £450, Utopia Bathrooms. Mirrored recessed **cupboards,** £100 each, made by carpenter. Heated **towel rail,** £157, Radiating Style. Tones Charcoal matt TNS7A **wall tiles** (400mm x 150mm); Tones White matt TNS1A **wall tiles;** both £23.66 per sq m; City Carrara matt CTBC1F **floor tiles** (300mm x 300mm), £27.11 per sq m; all Johnson Tiles. Vintage metal **soap dish,** £5.95; Striped **laundry baskets,** from £10 each; all Rockett St George. White ruffle **hand towel,** £6, H&M. Black and White **hand towels,** £12 for a hand towel, bath towel and flannel set, Tesco. Industrial **wall light,** £40, Garden Trading. Grey flower **bath mat,** £6, Alinea

WORDS STEPHANIE SMITH
PHOTOGRAPHS COLIN POOLE

FUN HOUSE

Brighten up your bathroom with pops of vibrant colour, funky stripes and geometrics

PRIMARY COLOURS
Look for cheerful patterns. Geometric **towel,** £9; Bright Stripe **towel,** £9; Yellow dipped **soap dispenser,** £5; Blue dipped **tumbler,** £4; all Tesco

EASY AS 1, 2, 3
Fill with fresh flowers. Colour trim jug **vases,** from £25 each, House of Fraser

Save space

UP & OVER
Hang up bathrobes. Hampton over-door **hook,** £28, Next

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

FLOAT AWAY
Ensure bathtime is fun for the kids. Three Yellow Ducks bath **toys,** £4, Roman at Home

SCARLET FEVER
Make boring essentials a thing of the past. Koziol Del swing-top **bin,** £10, Red Candy

STREAK FREE
Wipe away droplets. Lillnaggen **squeegee,** 80p, Ikea

No matter how small or plain your bathroom, well-chosen accessories can transform it in seconds. First, go for towels with striking patterns, then pick out one or two of the accent colours and add pops of these shades throughout your scheme. Finally, choose essentials – such as a bin, tumblers and soap dispensers – in colour-block shades. This look is great for family bathrooms and kids will love it, too.

CLASSIC DESIGN
Add colour and shimmer. Metro Blue Metallic glass **tiles,** £5.99 each, Topps Tiles

HEAVY METAL
Store toiletries in this old-school design. Metal **locker,** £39, Very

NATURAL TOUCH
Pile up clean towels. Dipped **baskets,** £20 set of two, Kaleidoscope

LITTLE THINGS
Pay attention to small details. Haven Brights Striped **light pull,** £1.79, Dunelm

WORDS LAURIE DAVIDSON

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MAY ISSUE ON SALE 1 APRIL

Discover how Helen used fresh shades of green and pretty florals to transform her kitchen

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20% OFF YOUR ORDER

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Plenty of choice

With a wide range of lovely fragrances to choose from, including Sweet Pea & Honeysuckle and Wild English Lavender, you're sure to find a scent to suit your mood. Plus, there's the Gardeners range – a great gift that will revive the hands of a green-fingered friend. All products contain essential oils and vitamins, among other natural ingredients, and are free from parabens and sulphates.

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OH-SO SWEET
Pamper yourself with Heathcote & Ivory's Lily of the Valley range

SHOW OFF
The pretty bottles are too good to be hidden away!

GREAT BUY
Try the Vintage Rose collection, from just £2.50

‘My husband

Stylist at Home Jolanta, 27, from south-east London, in the house allowed her to create exactly the look

MEET JOLANTA

My home...

ABOUT ME I’m Jolanta Rzadkosz, 27, co-owner of a cleaning company, and I live with my husband, Jan, also 27, a carpenter and partner in kitchen company Staite of the Art (staiteoftheart.co.uk).

MY HOME A two-bedroom flat in a new building in south-east London, which we moved into in July 2014.

WHEN I BOUGHT IT The flat was unfinished, because we found it early in the process. Jan was keen to build the kitchen and make the wardrobes himself, and we wanted to choose our own bathroom.

AND NOW The kitchen has been a huge success; I love the contrast of the dark grey and off-white units. There are oak floors throughout and we have a mixture of furniture given to us or bought in junk shops, along with some modern pieces.

STYLE TIP If you’re arty, buy some canvasses and paint them, using the same colours as your decor. As I’m not artistic, I asked a friend to do two paintings for us.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Easy living

‘In our open-plan space we’ve defined the separate areas into eating, cooking and relaxing; the kitchen is tucked away behind the grey-painted unit’

Buy it

Create an impression with a circular coffee table

PAGE 112

made the kitchen'

explains why having a master carpenter she wanted for their new home together

GREAT IDEA
'When you next visit a northern country, check out the animal-skin rugs - they're much cheaper than here'

Set it out
'This wooden tray from Zara Home is fairly old, but it has got better with age'

When Jan and I moved here from Poland five years ago, we settled in south-east London, and we've been here ever since,' says Jolanta. 'We had relatives living here and we stayed with them initially. Then we rented various flats in the area, while we worked hard and saved up enough to buy one ourselves.

Jan is a talented carpenter, and is always in demand, so he's now gone into business with a partner, producing handmade kitchens to order. It was while he was working on a project in the local area that he often stopped to watch a new building going up nearby, and to chat to some of the builders about its progress.

It was an empty site, which had been bombed during the Second World War, and the developer had decided to build three flats there. The street is a Victorian terrace, so the development was being constructed in a style that was going to be sympathetic to the surrounding houses.

Around 18 months ago, Jan was telling me about the flats, saying what an interesting block it would be, and also how solid the building and finish was, but still with the period look we liked. Then one day I said to Jan, "Why can't we think about buying one?" and it went from there.

Buying off-plan

There are two bigger flats – which are both laid out over two floors – but it was the smaller one that we were particularly interested in. It has such wonderful views and lots of light, and is also lovely and »

Different shades

'We both like the wooden panelled look, so I asked Jan to make tongue-and-groove kitchen doors in two contrasting colours'

Do it

Secure your dream home by buying it off-plan

PAGE 114

Regal touch

'The playing card marble tiles are from Studio Vertu. I love them but could only afford to buy two!'

"There's plenty of grey throughout the flat – it's my favourite colour! I've also used touches of distressed wood everywhere"

» warm, being insulated by the flats above and below. Because it was smaller with only two bedrooms, we really hoped it was within our budget.

By this stage, Jan had also got to know the developer, who was regularly on site, and they discussed a plan for us to buy it early in the process, and for Jan to build our kitchen and put in our own bathroom. Best of all, this meant we were able to buy the flat at a lower price. In fact, Jan ended up building the kitchens in all three flats, as the developer was really impressed with his work, so it turned out well all round.

For the final three months of the build, Jan was there after work and at the weekends putting our own kitchen in, and adjusting any minor details in the flat, as well as answering questions from the builders as things went along. He'd never been able to work on his own place before and he really enjoyed doing it.

We rented for three more months while the work was being finished off because we wanted to have everything ready before we moved in. Having seen other people living through disruptive building work, I didn't think I could bear it!

The perfect layout

By the time we moved in last summer, all the decorating was done and it was lovely and tidy. Because we got involved so early in the process, we also had a say over the layout of the property. We could have separated the big living space with partition walls, but we felt it would make the rooms feel too small and cramped. We loved the two large windows in the room, and we had a big discussion about where the kitchen should be.

The other flats each have the kitchen in a different place, but we liked the idea of it being self contained in an L-shape, which also means that when you walk into the room you see the sofa first, rather than the workings of a kitchen.

The two bedrooms are at the back of the flat, with an internal bathroom in the middle. Again, we could have chosen »

Stylists *at Home*

CHARLOTTE SAYS:

"My favourite room is the kitchen. The large white wall units reach all the way up to the ceiling for added storage but don't feel overbearing."

Smart space

'The kitchen peninsula, is really practical, and its simple style means it blends in seamlessly with the living room'

Get *Jolanta's style* in 3 BUYS

1 LIGHT TOUCH Tennyson pendant, £85, Neptune

2 ABOVE BOARD Apple Orchard oak serving and chopping board, £25, Home Candy

3 KEEN AS MUSTARD Ombre throw, £25, Tesco

Keep it cosy

'We were given this sofa by Jan's mother and, because it's neutral it goes with everything. The gold cushion covers from H&M really lift it'

STYLE TIP
'Mix and match seating styles for a relaxed look'

Simple look
'Rather than buying expensive wallpaper for our bedroom, we decided to paint one wall with stripes'

Rustic feel
'The weathered picture frame and peg rail are great for adding texture to our bedroom scheme'

'We've got a little balcony outside our bedroom window, and I fancied light, floaty curtains that would flutter in the breeze'

» a different layout, but we liked the idea of having more spacious rooms – something we'd never had in the flats we'd rented.

Choosing a style

We were both very keen to give our new home a contemporary look – but nothing too sparse or bland. So we chose the same oak flooring throughout the living areas and for both of the bedrooms to help create a better flow. We stuck to white for the walls, other than some painted stripes in the main bedroom and a light-grey shade in the spare bedroom, adding interest and colour with a variety of accessories. We've also gone for neutral, unfussy blinds everywhere, other than in our bedroom where we've got a little balcony. I had my heart set on some light, floaty curtains in here to flutter in the wind.

There's plenty of grey throughout the flat, which is my favourite colour, but we've lightened it with pink and green in the bedrooms, and I've added subtle hints of colour in the other rooms. The grey and white stripes in our bedroom can be seen again in the blind in the spare room, while the black metal chairs in the dining area match the black metal lamps in the spare bedroom. Plus, there are lots of distressed-wood accents scattered throughout the flat.

The last few bits

As well as my own ideas, I got a few tips from my neighbour, Jemima. I loved her black metal chairs around the table and knew this would really suit our room too. She also introduced me to a lovely website, cugogran.com, which has really unusual one-off pieces of furniture and accessories.

Even though we already knew this area, we're really enjoying owning our own home here and feeling part of the neighbourhood. And it's so nice being able to choose what we want to have in our flat rather than worry about changing anything in a rented property. I'm so pleased Jan discovered this flat – it's lovely to have a place to call our own.'

WORDS STEPHANIE SMITH **PHOTOGRAPHS** DAVID GILES

Stylists *at Home*

KEELEY SAYS:

'The bedroom is beautiful – I especially like the stylish striped wall. It looks like a lovely room to relax in at the end of the day.'

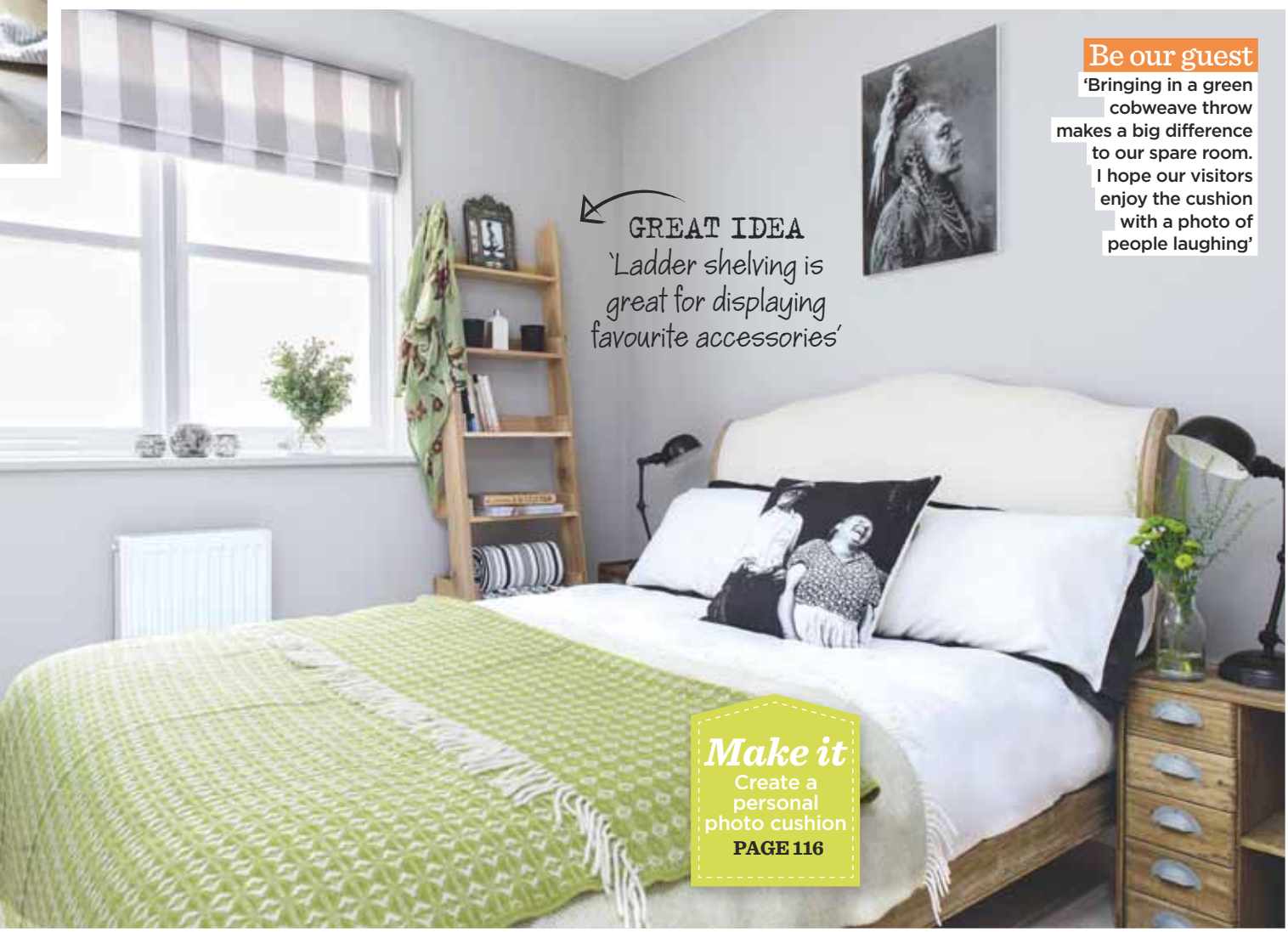
Best of both

'Because we didn't have room for a separate shower, we chose the Showercube bath from Bathstore for its extra room at the shower end'

Hit the shops

Where to go and what to buy to get Jolanta's style

- **BLACK METAL** chairs work especially well with Jolanta's dining table, giving it a strong urban look. Find similar ones at Cox & Cox, £199 for a pair.
- **METRO-STYLE** tiles in grey create a modern feel in the bathroom. Get the look with the Savoy Decor tiles in Dew from Johnson Tiles, £41.74 per sq m.
- **PALE BLINDS** help keep Jan and Jolanta's flat light and airy. For similar, try Wild Linen in Pure White, £75 each, and Freeport Marl stripe, from £39.99; both Tuiss.
- **SHAKER-STYLE** kitchen units, made by Jan, were painted in contrasting shades of Down Pipe (dark grey) and Strong White (neutral), both Estate Eggshell, £51 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball.



GREAT IDEA

'Ladder shelving is great for displaying favourite accessories'

Be our guest

'Bringing in a green cobweave throw makes a big difference to our spare room. I hope our visitors enjoy the cushion with a photo of people laughing'

Make it

Create a personal photo cushion

PAGE 116

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£281.99
WAYFAIR
Take inspiration from Scandi design with the Hugo coffee table (H50cm x diameter 90cm)

£146.99
WORLDSTORES
Pick the East Indies Round coffee table (H40cm x diameter 60cm) for antique style

Buy Jolanta's look...

COFFEE TABLES

Follow Jolanta's lead and choose a circular design for your living room

Stylish design

Pick a coffee table in a cool circular design to soften your living room look. Without any sharp corners, a round coffee table is a safer option for those with little ones and, while rectangular pieces can appear to close off a space, a round design will help open up the room, making it the perfect choice for smaller areas. Take a look at our top 10 buys, starting from just £90.

£184
HEAL'S
Work the striking basket-style Kartell Panier Transparent table in Brown (H21cm x diameter 61cm) in to your space

£109
BARKER & STONEHOUSE
Try the Greenwich round coffee table (H30cm x diameter 45cm) for reclaimed chic

£165
DEBENHAMS
Go bold with the modern Ben de Lisi Home Sorbet coffee table in Grey (H45cm x diameter 80cm)

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

WORDS CASSIE PRYCE

£195
HABITAT

Channel an industrial vibe with the Coralie Low Walnut coffee table (H33.2cm x diameter 84cm)

Style secrets

Use our top tips for making the most of your coffee table

- **TWO IN ONE** If storage is an issue in your household, consider going for a coffee table with built-in storage. This could be a simple shelf underneath the table top, or even a small drawer for hiding away remote controls.
- **PERFECT PAIRING** Team a coffee table with a rug to create an inviting living space. Choose a circular one to match its shape.
- **SIZE MATTERS** Don't forget to measure the space for your new coffee table before buying and make sure you have plenty of room to walk around it.

Sleek finish

£379
MARKS & SPENCER

Make a style statement and choose the glass and copper-effect Mayfield coffee table (H40cm x diameter 73cm)

£90
IKEA

Store magazines and gadgets neatly on the shelf of the Vejmon table in Black-Brown (H47cm x diameter 90cm)

£249
MADE.COM

Mix copper and wood for an on-trend look with the Range coffee table (H42.5cm x diameter 80cm)

£99
JOHN LEWIS

Embrace a contemporary vibe with the Abin coffee table in White/Oak (H45cm x diameter 90cm)

Follow Jolanta's lead...

PURCHASE OFF-PLAN

Make your home your own from the very start by buying a smart new-build that's perfectly personalised for you and your lifestyle

Buying a home before it has been built is nothing new, but the latest rise in house prices means it's an attractive route to finding your dream home. Not only can you secure the plot of your choice if, for example, you want a large garden for the children, but if you buy first in a scheme, it's likely that you'll get your home for a great price. What's more, you'll usually be given the opportunity to choose your own fixtures, fittings and finishes from the ranges available before you move in.

Once you've secured your new home, you'll have plenty of time to arrange your mortgage, book removals, get the family ready to move and save up for any extra items, all while work is being completed. Then enjoy the excitement of seeing your own home being built from scratch.

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

IN THE KNOW
Always ask questions if there's anything you don't understand

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q Where can I start looking for an off-plan home online?

A Property portals, such as Rightmove and Zoopla, will show you what new developments are available in the area you're looking to buy, plus you can compare the prices of new-build homes. Next, browse homebuilders' or developers' websites and check out their Facebook or Twitter pages. This will give you a flavour of the scheme and the new community as a whole.

Q Who are the best people to talk to about buying off-plan?

A If you're not familiar with the area where you're thinking of buying, spend some time locally to get a feel of what it's like as a place to live. Speak to shop owners and estate agents and see if there are any neighbourhood events as they're a great way to meet people. It's also a good idea to visit other new developments and see what kind of area and homes suit you.

Developers love to talk about their projects, so never be afraid to ask about their homes, how they build to suit the location, materials used and customer care. The sales and marketing team should be able to answer questions, too, such as what the building timescale is and when they anticipate that the homes will be ready for occupation – for example, if you're in the first phase, you might be surrounded by building work after you've moved in. Ask if they have a scale model of the development and plans to help you understand the layout, as show homes may not be representative of the property you are buying.

MOVING DAY
Detached three-bed house by Barratt Homes in Market Harborough, around £240,000

Q What are the benefits and pitfalls of buying before my home is built?

A The biggest plus is being able to pick the best plot for you, have a say in your internal layout and fixtures and fittings, and even pick a parking space. However, the downside is that you'll have to wait. A large development may take three to fours years to be completed, plus you won't be able to see what you're buying until it's built, running a risk that it may not be exactly as you've imagined it. CGI images are a good guide, but agents and developers should also provide in-depth information, including a full set of landscape drawings, electrical plans, elevation details and internal and external specifications.

Q How can I work out my house-buying budget?

A One of the benefits of buying a new home is that you can take advantage of Government-backed schemes, such as Help to Buy. It's also worth speaking to the New Homes Mortgage Helpline, an independent advisor, which offers free and impartial advice. Buying off-plan means you'll probably have to put down a 10 to 30% deposit on exchange of contract, but often you won't have to pay any more until completion.

Ensure that the contract you sign includes clauses to protect you and your money in the event that the development is late completing. Check also that your developer is insured so that, if the worst happens and they go bust during the build, you'll get your deposit back. Most lenders won't agree to a rate until six months prior to completion, so you might find you can't secure your loan in advance. However, this may mean that you can take advantage of more favourable rates.

WORDS RACHEL OGDEN. THANK YOU TO ACORN BLUE, BANDA PROPERTY, BARRATT HOMES, BRENTFORD LOCK WEST/ISIS WATERSIDE REGENERATION, HADLEY

HOME TO ROOST
Three-bed house by Millgates at Meadows Reach in Binfield, Berkshire. Prices start from £420,000

TIP *Take a look at snagging.org for a list of common faults to watch out for.*

Q **What happens during the build and how can I plan for my new home?**

A Visit as often as you can as your home is being built. Floorplans can be difficult to understand, so it pays to see the space you'll end up with so you can start to plan where your furniture or built-in wardrobes will go. Keep your tape measure to hand and don't forget ceiling height, as it makes a big difference to any space, particularly in terms of light. It's also a good idea to mark out the shape of any large pieces of furniture, such as sofas and dining tables, on the floor in masking tape, to put them in the context of the room. If you're still having trouble visualising the space, ask the interior architect to walk you through and explain each room.

Q **How do I tackle snagging after my home has been built?**

A Just before you complete, you should be invited to a home demonstration. This is a run-through of the workings of your home and provides an opportunity for you to highlight any issues (such as scuffed paintwork), which may need to be addressed in advance. Once you've moved in, keep a list of any faults. Make sure there is a snagging clause in your contract that means the developer or builder is obliged to resolve any issues. You may find that you'll end up with a list after a month or so, then another of things that appear over the next year as the building settles. New homes come with a 10-year warranty such as the Premier Guarantee, NHBC or BLP, so check you're buying from a registered builder.

Property apps

Stay ahead of the game

- **HALIFAX HOMEFINDER** This app doesn't just show you homes that are available, it'll also estimate how much you can borrow and what your monthly repayments may be.
- **BARRATT HOMES PROPERTY SEARCH** Browse a selection of the company's latest projects, from a plan of the whole development to interior specifications.
- **RIGHTMOVE, PRIME LOCATION & ZOOPLA** General search apps that allow you to research, save results and contact local estate agents.

PROPERTY GROUP, THE BUYING SOLUTION, WATERFORDS, *PROPERTY UNCOVERED* BY LOUISA FLETCHER (£12.99, HARRIMAN HOUSE)

Make Jolanta's style...
PHOTO CUSHION

Add a personal touch to your bedroom with this customised cushion

FOR WHERE TO SHOP GUIDE SEE PAGE 128

Follow Jolanta's lead and have a go at this simple project to update your bedroom look in a flash. Or why not make a series of cushions to scatter along your sofa?

HOW TO

YOU WILL NEED

- Measuring tape
- Fabric scissors
- 50cm White cotton fabric, £2.99, Dunelm
- Black & white photograph
- Iron
- Pins
- Transfer paper, £3.50 for seven A4 sheets, Tesco Direct
- Sewing machine
- Cushion pad (30cm x 40cm), £4.50, John Lewis

1 Measure and cut one 30cm x 40cm, and two 25cm x 40cm pieces of white fabric. Set the two smaller pieces aside. Print the photo onto a sheet of transfer paper (if the image has any text on it, flip it before printing).

2 Cut around the edge of the printed photo and place face down onto the 30cm x 40cm piece of fabric. Iron on a hot setting and allow to cool. Peel off the backing paper.

3 Hem along one 40cm side of each of the smaller pieces of fabric. Lay them on top of the printed fabric, with hemmed sides overlapping, right sides together, and pin in place. Sew all the way around. Turn the cushion cover out and pop the cushion pad inside.

Cost £10.99

PROJECT SUZIE ATTAWAY **STYLING** CASSIE PRYCE **PHOTOGRAPHS** DAVID GILES THROW, £20, BHS. TRIPOD LAMP, £25, SAINSBURY'S

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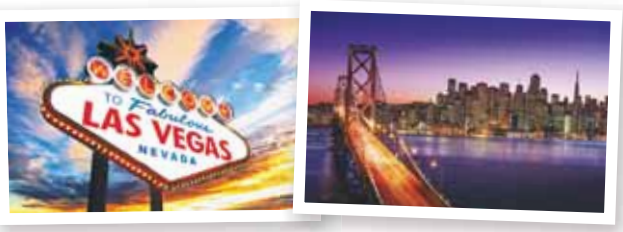

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- Wicked (right)
- War Horse
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4* Menzies Stourport Manor	Nr Worcester	£66
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Multiyork competition

There is one prize worth £1,000. Entry instructions form part of the rules. This competition is open to readers aged 18 and over who are resident in the UK mainland only, other than the employees (and their families) of Time Inc. (UK) Ltd, the reproduction house and printer of *Style at Home*, Multiyork and their agents. Use of a false name or address will result in disqualification. All entries must be made directly by the person entering the competition. The winner will be drawn at random by an independent person. No bulk or third party entries accepted. Only one entry per person permitted. Prizes are subject to availability and the prize suppliers' terms and conditions. Reasonable efforts will be made to contact a winner. Failure to respond and/or provide a delivery address, or failure to meet the eligibility requirements may result in forfeiture of the prize. If the winner cannot be contacted or is unable to comply with the terms and conditions, the promoter reserves the right to offer the prize to the next eligible entrant drawn at random. *Style at Home* reserves the right to offer a prize of greater or equal value. All prizes must be accepted as offered with no cash alternative and are limited to the prize detailed. The prize cannot be used in conjunction with other offers or promotions. The winner is responsible for expenses and arrangements not specifically included in the prize. All details and prices are correct at time of going to press. Proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. No responsibility can be accepted for entries that are lost, delayed or damaged in the post. No correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned. Only one entry per household. The decision of the Editor is final. The winner will be notified by post by *Style at Home* after the closing date. Entry implies acceptance of these rules. The prize includes delivery but excludes removal of old fixtures. Installation not included. The winner must cooperate with publicity arising as a result of winning a competition. Winner's details can be provided by contacting *Style at Home,* Time Inc. (UK) Ltd, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU from 9 May 2015. Lines open at 0.01am on 3 March 2015 and close at midnight on 11 April 2015.

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April HOME SAVER

Tired of a never-ending list of tasks? We've the know-how and tips you need to cross off a few

BE INSPIRED Try out different colourways with Dulux's new app

Be creative with accessible storage

Try our clever tips to keep your home neat and tidy

ALL IN ORDER Get organised in your home with the Four Tier over-door storage rack, £24.99, Lakeland

Hook up An easy way to keep dressing gowns, towels or aprons organised is by screwing a hook or two into the top of a door and hanging them up. If you don't want to make a hole in the woodwork, or you live in rented property, an over-the-door hook is a great alternative. Try the Six Shirt Foldable hanger, £15.99, Lakeland.

A place for everything Multi-pocket hanging caddies utilise a door to store magazines, shoes or toys, keeping them accessible. Try the Hanging Pocket Tidy in Mahjong Stripe, £30, Deckchairstripes.

Simple storage Attach a towel rail (the type usually attached to a bathroom wall) to the back of a door for scarves or belts, and add S hooks to hang handbags.

Hiding essentials A tiered multi-basket rack that hooks over a door offers as much storage as a new cupboard. It's ideal for kitchen pantry essentials, or in a bathroom for easy-to-reach toiletries.

TRANSFORM WITH COLOUR

Give a room a simple makeover with our easy tips for using paint

✓ **BE PREPARED** Clear the walls and move furniture. Lay down dustsheets. Fill any holes or cracks and, once dry, sand over until smooth. Wipe down walls with sugar soap.

✓ **TEST OUT COLOURS** Try out the Visualizer app from Dulux and test out paint colours on photos of your room. Once you've narrowed down your choice, paint testers onto card and Blu-Tack them to the walls. Look at them at different times of the day to see how the light affects them.

✓ **GET NEAT EDGES** Apply masking tape along the edges of skirting boards, door frames and ceiling. Paint up to the tape and remove while the paint is still wet to get a crisp edge.

✓ **USE THE CORRECT TOOL** Go around the edges with a small brush and fill in larger areas with a roller. If you need to take a break, wrap brushes and rollers in cling film to prevent them drying out.

WORDS BECKY CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHS DULUX; SHUTTERSTOCK

TIP *Use a cork memo board to keep jewellery safe by pinning pieces in place.*

3 uses for... CLOTHES PEGS

- **SAVE YOUR FINGERS** Hold a nail in place with a peg while you hammer it in so you don't hit yourself.
- **MAKE A MEMO CLIP** Glue a small magnet to the back of a peg and use as a useful memo clip. Get organised by writing family names on them.
- **ORDER SCARVES** Clip pegs over the horizontal bar of a wire coat hanger and use to hold scarves in place.

All in the details Paint a stair runner

Refresh your stairs with paint for a funky new look

1 Repair cracks with wood filler and sand smooth. Wash the stairs and paintwork with sugar soap to get rid of grease and dirt. When dry, paint the stairs with one coat of primer and leave to dry.

2 Give the stairs two coats of eggshell, leaving each to dry. Using a pencil and masking tape, measure and mark out the position of your runner, leaving equal space on either side.

3 Paint the runner between the tape, starting from the top of the stairs. Apply two coats, leaving to dry between each. Make sure the paint is absolutely dry before you walk on your new stairs.

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